

Sat
12/27/97

BERGEN HOLIDAY WRESTLING

SJR's Palo makes his mark

Freshman posts impressive wins

By **RON FOX**
Staff Writer

PARAMUS — With the 1997-98 wrestling season in Bergen County quickly becoming the Year of the Freshman, a young man who traveled two counties to get here made his mark Saturday in the Bergen County Coaches Holiday Tournament.

Mike Palo, a St. Joseph 112-pounder who resides in Belleville, proved that fame in the sport is fleeting when he eliminated Pascack Valley junior Ryan Hult, who a week earlier had handed State place winner Sam Chey a loss in the Hanover Park tournament.

Palo came out with a double-leg take-down assault and added another on the way to the 5-4 upset victory over the fourth-seeded Hult. But for Palo and his followers, it may not have been an upset. He was a Junior State champion last year and also won the State freestyle title in his age group.

"I just took it as a normal match," Palo said with the assurance shown by other freshmen, such as Hackensack's Chris Bitetto, Bergen Catholic's Justin Gooch, and Fair Lawn's Steven Becker, who display the unflappability that comes with being hardened by recreation-level success. "I watched him a lot before and I knew I could work the double. He stands up straight."

But that was in the morning preliminaries. In the afternoon quarterfinals, Palo proved that he cannot be easily categorized because his arsenal is vast for a young man. He won again without using the double-leg, pinning fifth-seeded Mike Monteith of Ramsey.

Palo caught his man in a high single and delivered him to the mat in something resembling a Navy stack. In the second period, his first takedown was a high, driving upperbody charge, and his next was an underhook throw that set up his pin. Top-seeded Dave Salmond of Garfield, who pinned two opponents in a combined 1 minute, 52 seconds, is Palo's opponent in this morning's semifinals, which begin at 11 o'clock at Paramus High School.

The only tightly challenged top seed was Justin Frohlich of Pascack Hills, who advanced to the 140-pound semis by pulling out a 9-8 decision over rugged ninth-seed Paul Seimon of Don Bosco Prep.

One of the most remarkable moves of the day belonged to Lodi 125-pound sophomore Rob DiDomenico, who found himself fully in the air, courtesy of a body hoist by Ridgefield's sixth-seeded Jim Niosi. While the referee cautioned Niosi to take it easy and not slam his opponent, the third-seeded DiDomenico made plans.

As Niosi delivered him rather gently to the mat, DiDomenico put his hands to the mat, rolled enough to gain freedom of movement, and turned his man for the pin.

"I couldn't even tell you what he did," said his coach and father, Nick DiDomenico. "It's not something you teach because you don't want to be lifted up. But he's got good mat sense and he always knows where he is."

His son not only knew where he was, he knew where he was headed and what he was going to do once he got there. It got him into the semis against second-seeded Nick Fokas, a former State place winner who pinned all three of his opponents Saturday. Up top of the 125 bracket, top-seeded Chris Brizzi of Ramsey scored an 11-1 decision over Bergenfield's surprising Bob Correggio, who pinned his two previous opponents.

Brizzi will meet Elmwood Park's fourth-seeded Paul Chiaramonte, whose step over gained him a 5-4 win over St. Joseph's Mike Massenzio.

In the preliminary round, seven pins were recorded under 20 seconds, led by Matt Shaban of Indian Hills, who won in 11 seconds of his 125-pound bout.

Big turnaround for Indian Hills

PARAMUS — Indian Hills entered only seven wrestlers in the Bergen County Coaches tournament Saturday, but not for the usual reasons. This is not a story about a dying program, which Indian Hills once was. This is a story about a program that has made a remarkable recovery thanks to a host of dedicated men.

In 1989, there were so few athletes interested in the program that the varsity schedule was shelved, leaving only a junior varsity schedule. Head coach Dick Schlenker, who was planning to retire from coaching, instead dug in and continued to work for the future against great odds.

If not for a trainer's room full of injuries, the Braves would have entered an entire lineup Saturday. Among those missing was 160-pound district medalist Austin Wall, who underwent arthroscopic knee surgery last week. But this is a team that rebounded from near extinction to go 13-4 last year.

"I graduated from Northern Highlands in 1981, and that year Dick Schlenker's team was district champion," said John Sebastian, sharing the head coaching duties with Schlenker. "The following year was the start of their decline. They just didn't have a feeder program."

Schlenker did not abandon ship. Local resident Dan McDonnell had two young sons interested in wrestling, so he took it upon himself to start a recreation program for youngsters. Both sons are standout varsity wrestlers now. The Braves have climbed because Schlenker never gave up the ship, McDonnell came along just in time, and Sebastian brought in his effervescence and expertise.

"To think after 30 years of coaching, Dick would be willing to let me come in as co-head coach," said Sebastian, a two-time district champion and a regional finalist who also wrestled at Montclair State. "That shows his love for the sport and a love of Bergen County."

To join their staff, Sebastian has brought in three-time regional champion John Reese of Fair Lawn, and Division III All-American Darren Torsone.

Four of seven Braves advanced to Saturday night's quarterfinals. The team is young and mending and provides great hope for what was once a doomed program.

— RON FOX

WRESTLING

Bergen Coaches tournament

AT PARAMUS

PRELIMINARY ROUND

103 pounds

David Gernakian, Pascack Valley, bye; Louis Lopez, Ridgefield Park, bye; Anthony Barber, Garfield, tech fall, Jon Porto, Palsades Park, 17-1; Gerald Corroll, Hackensack, pin Anuj Kaporr, NV/Demarest, 3:25; Ken Chu, River Dell, pin Rich Amello, Elmwood Park, 4:41; Eric Campagna, Pascack Hills, dec. Delrede Mammano, NV/Old Tappan, 16-15; Jason Steinfeld, Westwood, pin Tom Calnan, Bergen Catholic, 2:23; Sungil Lee, Leonia, pin Matt Michels, Northern Highlands, 1:03; Chris McDonnell, Indian Hills, pin Bill Hordern, Bogota, 0:46; Jarod Majka, Ramapo, pin Jim Cokless, Dumont, 0:48; Joe Pedevill, Tenafly, pin Joe Petrucci, Mahwah, 3:26; Ron Palmieri, North Bergen, pin Jojo Canatta, Emerson, 1:38; Jason Fink, Paramus, dec. William Hul, Rutherford, 18-2; Mike Bucci, Ridgefield, pin Rich Salmon, Bergenfield, 3:21; Walter Bormann, Lodi, pin Justin Dolci, Paramus Catholic, 4:57; Dan Taylor, St. Joseph, pin Mike Lazar, Fair Lawn, 0:32.

112 pounds

Ronnie Porto, Palsades Park, bye; Mike Monteith, Ramsey, bye; Mark Sassman, Bergen Catholic, bye; Derek Bronsky, New Milford, bye; Dave Salmon, Garfield, pin Dan Martino, Hasbrouck Heights, 8:30; Jim Azzolina, Westwood, pin Jake Noy, Fair Lawn, 0:45; Tom Rossi, Indian Hills, pin Chris Costa, Lodi, 2:56; David Acofca, Cresskill, pin Ilya Mezheritsky, Teaneck, 3:26; Mike Palo, St. Joseph, pin Car Cocuzza, Emerson, 1:44; Ryan Hult, Pascack Valley, pin George Dabal, North Bergen, 1:14; Jesus Tepole, Bergen Tech, pin Sean Serafino, Ridgefield, 0:27; John Dimeglio, Fort Lee, dec. Ersin Tozduman, Lyndhurst, 11-5; Kurt Haas, Northern Highlands, dec. Mark Mariano, Rutherford, 18-9; Grant Dellatorre, River Dell, pin Mike DeRosa, Hackensack, 1:12; Steve Maher, Bergenfield, dec. Scott O'Hara, Don Bosco, 6-5; Mike Kravynovich, Pascack Hills, dec. Mike Yacovelli, NV/Old Tappan, 6-5.

119 pounds

Matt Sapnar, River Dell, pin Daniel Fullam, Don Bosco, 3:36.

125 pounds

Bob Correggio, Bergenfield, pin Ahamar Jaffari, Fair Lawn, 0:57; Nick Fokas, Bergen Catholic, pin Ryan Wild, Waldwick, 0:15.

130 pounds

Brian Basile, River Dell, pin Omar Ortega, Lyndhurst, 0:53; Derek Cunningham, Pascack Hills, pin Ted Lauarias, Teaneck, 4:25; Justin McDougall, Ramapo, pin Charles Kryzslak, Becton, 2:34.

135 pounds

Eric Norgaard, St. Joseph Regional, pin Scott Smith, Mahwah, 0:31; Chris Moran, Paramus, pin John Muscarella, River Dell, 5:58; Ed An pin Justin Rauch, Ridgewood, 5:18; Mike Spilewski, NV/Old Tappan, pin John Lotz, Westwood, 0:59; Uri Rossi, Fair Lawn, pin Mike Rossi, Emerson, 1:03; Justin Zajack, Ridgefield Park, pin Alex Bohr, Dwight-Englewood, 0:53; Tim O'Hara, Ridgefield, pin Ryan Williams, Ramapo, 1:00; Todd Snyder, Pascack Hills, pin Kevin Lamb, Pascack Valley, 2:39; Donald Gribben, Don Bosco Prep, dec. Vito Gerardi, 14-5; Pete Karamitas, Tenafly, dec. Dan Chlccarelli, Bergen Catholic, 5-2; Frank Scaglione, Lyndhurst, dec. Ed Solis, Garfield, 13-3; Jesse Moreng, Northern Highlands, pin Mike Preis, Ramsey, 0:29.

140 pounds

Paul Selmon, Don Bosco Prep, pin Anthony Nappi, Ramsey, 1:30; Tony Kim, NV/Old Tappan, pin Oguz Cliftbasal, Lyndhurst, 4:51; Mark Reismann, Ridgefield Park, dec. Carl Lucas, Bergen Catholic, 6-5; Jorge Quintana, Paramus, pin Phil Maffetoso, Bogota, 1:10.

145 pounds

Mark Galorenzo, Bergen Catholic, pin Derek Jun, Bergen Tech, 1:00; Mike Quinn, River Dell, pin Mike Arp, Elmwood Park, 4:30; Nick Granito, Emerson, pin Ramsey Ayyad, North Bergen, 2:19; Brian Klefer, Mahwah, pin John Lastra, Bergenfield, 3:37; Jason Eckhardt, Tenafly, dec. Joe Careri, Lodi, 8-7; Paul Pellegrino, Northern Highlands, pin Rich Wdowiak, Saddle Brook, 0:40; John Paul Grippa, Don Bosco, pin Rob Jewett, New Milford, 2:39; Mike Kerbe, Ridgefield Park, pin Joe Padulla, NV/Old Tappan, 4:00; Reginald Gaeles, Teaneck, def. Dave Barry, Cliffside Park; Mark Radolan, Fort Lee, dec. John Behnke, Paramus, 13-1; Matt Romeo, St. Joseph, pin Ryan O'Connor, Ramsey, 2:51; Ralph Denisco, Pascack Hills, pin Eric Fugnitti, Ridgefield, 0:43.

152 pounds

Phil DiBiasi, Ramsey, dec. Rob Ollett, Northern Highlands, 10-2; William Watson, Cresskill, pin Hiral Shah, Paramus Catholic, 2:14; Zeke Hernandez, Cliffside Park, pin Dario Vargas, Hackensack, 0:57; Chris Villoslada, Leonia, dec. Mo Osman, Tenafly, 9-3; Mike D'Andrea, NV/Old Tappan, pin John Bliss, New Milford, 3:47; Craig Andrull, Garfield, pin Jorge Maldonado, Teaneck, 3:30; Chris Menzel, Ridgefield Park, dec. Scott Barchetto, Paramus, 5-3; Brett Pazian, Dumont, dec. Kevin Kohan, Pascack Valley, 15-7; Mike Chung, Fort Lee, pin Leonard Mwangi, Ridgewood, 0:38; Joe Daniel, Emerson, pin John Morille, Bogota, 1:28; Joe Murtaugh, Westwood, pin Sean Dougan, Fair Lawn, 3:17; Dennis Winters, Pascack Hills, pin Alan Ketabchi, Ramapo, 1:40; Idaldo Gonzalez, North Bergen, dec. Jason Pierce, NV/Demarest, 11-8; Evan Tryforos, Glen Rock, pin Quentin Unsworth, St. Joseph Reg., 4:57; Brian Kearns, Lyndhurst, pin Dan Rapp, Mahwah, 1:22; Kevin Collier, Bergen Catholic, pin Joshua Garcia, Bergenfield, 0:49.

160 pounds

Nick Matthews, Waldwick, pin Bryan Klima, North Bergen, 3:47; Derek Pickinitch, New Milford, pin Jim Clark, NV/Demarest, 2:15; Joe Cocuzza, Emerson, pin Roy SImpadian, Ridgewood, 3:37; Ryan Goodman, Dwight-Englewood, pin Fred Clark, Bergenfield, 3:34; Ed Byron, Paramus, pin Vinnie Polara, Lyndhurst, 0:53.

171 pounds

Mike Bassett, Paramus, pin Francisco Melendez, Cliffside Park, 0:45; Steve Vecchione, Westwood, pin John Gennaro, Pascack Valley, 1:02; Frank Desimini, Waldwick, pin Frank Caneja, Garfield, 3:27; John Mulhern, Emerson, pin Casey Vanbrookhoven, Ramapo, 0:40; Brian Frush, Northern Highlands, pin Phil Salvatoreliello, St. Mary's, 0:42; Mark Christian, Ramsey, dec. Dustin Cook, NV/Old Tappan, 20-8; Adam Silca, Lyndhurst, pin Dennis Conway, Fort Lee, 1:27; Vahan Manjikian, Lodi, pin Nick Gouvouniotis, Hackensack, 2:35; Joe Sentipal, Hasbrouck Heights, dec. George Mazzetti, North Bergen, 11-3; Paul Lada, Elmwood Park, pin Ken Celenza, Saddle Brook, 0:13; Justin Quattrini, Tenafly, dec. Hossein Abodi, Don Bosco, 10-9; Kevin Tedesco, Ridgefield, pin Joe Weaver, New Milford, 2:51; Zach Gutin, River Dell, pin Kevin Bleien, Glen Rock, 1:34; Joe Mormile, NV/Demarest, pin Tim Burghart, Bergen Catholic, 1:10.

189 pounds

Harry Marquez, Rutherford, pin Steven DePalma, Fort Lee, 2:24; Dan Shelton, Ridgefield Park, dec. Mike Scott, Ramapo, 12-3; Dominick Santoli, Bergen Catholic, tech. fall Jim Gallione, NV/Demarest, 19-3; Mike Healy, Lodi, pin Lenny Cohen, Pascack Valley, 0:47; Keith Koller, Garfield, pin Chris DiSanto, Saddle Brook, 1:32; Ed Yucls, Fair Lawn, pin Tom O'Mella, Westwood, 1:23; Matt Hinzpeter, NV/Old Tappan, pin Jacob Cintron, Elmwood Park, 5:39; Guy Malatino, Ramsey, pin Sam Davies, Dwight-Englewood, 1:43; Nick Ponzini, Paramus, pin Justin Murphy, Northern Highlands, 0:40; Arick Burrell, Hackensack, pin Scott Monfietto, Cresskill, 2:39; Andrew Tuculescu, Ridgewood, pin Bill Bliss, Pascack Hills, 5:43; Joe Cutruzula, St. Joseph Reg., dec. Luke Silca, Lyndhurst, 13-2.

215 pounds

Bill Cummings, Pascack Valley, pin Greg Anzano, Dumont, 3:20; Corey Horton, Fort Lee, pin Jon Cellibas, Mahwah, 4:50; Ken Edmonson, NV/Demarest, pin Vincent Gugliemottli, Don Bosco, 2:54; Nicholas Lapolla, Bergen Catholic, pin Eric Hessler, Pascack Hills, 0:35; Russ Whitney, NV/Old Tappan, pin Dan Mangani, Ridgefield, 1:10; Tony Rotundo, North Bergen, pin Jarod Randall, River Dell, 1:10; Kyle Good, Indian Hills, pin Will Luca, Ramsey, 1:36; Rocco Compitillo, Midland Park, pin Steve Lee, Bergen Tech, 1:33; Jeff Burke, St. Mary's, dec. T.J. Zuria, Ridgewood, 15-11; Matt Greenberg, Northern Highlands, dec., Louis Diaz, New Milford, 18-5; Bryan Resstler, Hackensack, pin Marc Amatucci, Rutherford, 5:21; Vic Pereira, Saddle Brook, pin Clint House, Cliffside Park, 3:28; Tim VanOverloop, Emerson, pin James Touhey, Ramapo, 3:46; Harry Aristakesian, Garfield, pin Steve Rinaldi, Hasbrouck Heights, 0:42.

275 pounds

Vinnie Rizzo, Waldwick, pin Jon Daffron, Ramsey, 0:57; Phil Yucls, Fair Lawn, pin Garrett Newman, Westwood, 2:54; Jarrod Finelli, NV/Demarest, pin Adam Plati, Bergen Catholic, 4:21; Paul Albanese, Palsades Park, dec. Juan Bauz, North Bergen, 8-2; John Currid, Pascack Hills, pin Matt D'Alaisio, Paramus Catholic, 0:17; Lou Pakovics, Rutherford, pin John DiGiorgio, Ramapo, 0:21; Aaron Colliaro, Garfield, pin Chris Hook, Paramus, 1:57; Nick Poulicakos, Cresskill, pin Joseph Rivera, Cliffside Park, 0:30; Steve Havans, Dumont, pin Omar Cooper, Teaneck, 0:42; Bill Taylor, Northern Highlands, pin Joe Compitello, Don Bosco, 3:56; Bob Balsamo, River Dell, pin Anthony Maslino, St. Mary's, 1:21; Bob Malder, Fort Lee, pin Alex Hallstein, Leonia, 1:44; T.J. Hicks, Indian Hills, dec. Mike Schifano, Lyndhurst, 10-8; Bob Cannizzaro, Lodi, pin Garrett Rothschild, Pascack Valley, 0:29.

12/27/1997
Saturday

FIRST ROUND

103 pounds

Germaklan dec. Barber, 6-0; Chu dec. Corroll, 4-2; Campagna by disqualification Lopez; Lee pin Steinfeld, 1:12; McDonnell pin Majka, 1:59; Palmieri dec. Pedevill, 10-8; Fink pin Burri, 0:22; Taylor pin Borrmann, 0:48.

112 pounds

Salmon pin Azzolina, 0:22; Porto pin Rossi, 2:30; Montelth dec. Acofca, 3-1; Palo dec. Hult, 5-4; Sasseman pin Topole, 3:31; Hass pin Dimeglio, 0:46; Della-torre pin Bronsky, 3:40; Kravynovich pin Maher, 0:41.

119 pounds

Andrew Bergmann, Fair Lawn, pin Chris Costello, Ramsey, 0:44; Tom Gallione, NV/Demarest, pin Paul Quilasavo, Bogota, 1:13; Joe Ceccacci, Saddle Brook, pin Francisco Urena, Teaneck, 0:16; Rich Vanhouten, Northern Highlands, pin Joe Panglone, New Milford, 1:07; Jason English, Bergen Catholic, pin Jim Jessup, 5:51; Justin Mezzadri, Pascack Valley, pin Alex Varallo, Midland Park, 1:17; Ron Heron, Tenafly, dec. Gerry Giesple, Palsades Park, 8-7; Victor Villalba, Dumont, pin Rick Ziegler, Ridgewood, 2:30; Justin Labrosse, Hackensack, pin Steve Duarte, Lodi, 0:57; Chris Jasnoss, Cresskill, pin Jason Calogero, Bergen Tech, 1:05; Adam McLaren, Pascack Hills, pin Woo Jung Kang, NV/Old Tappan, 0:43; Tom Herman, Ridgfield, dec. Antonio Viera, North Bergen, 16-8; Vicken Mnassian, Westwood, pin Matt Sapnar, River Dell, 3:43; Steve Neff, Bergenfield, pin Terry Shelton, Lyndhurst, 1:23; Tom Murgolo, St. Joseph, dec. James Luciano, Paramus, 4-2; Oliver Ruiz, Cliffside Park, pin Dominick Attardo, Emerson, 1:60.

125 pounds

Chris Brizzi, Ramsey, pin Brian Perez, Cresskill, 0:48; Peter Graf, NV/Old Tappan, pin Peter Tomas, Don Bosco Prep, 1:20; Corressio pin Kyle Lezette, 2:57; Mike Klapper, Glen Rock, dec. Charlie Delgado, 8-5; John Klaus, Northern Highlands, dec. Joe Marsar, Ridgfield Park, 14-8; Mike Massenzio, St. Joseph Regional, pin Anumode Phillip, Teaneck, 1:48; Alex Koh, Westwood, dec. Nick Gallo, River Dell, 8-7; Paul Chiaromonte, Elmwood Park, pin James McCullough, Ridgewood, 2:58; Robert DiDomenico, Lodi, pin Emil Sawyer, Hackensack, 3:58; Matt Shaban, Indian Hills, pin Mike Dalarso, Bogota, 0:11; Alberto Diaz, Saddle Brook, pin Manny Quijano, North Bergen, 3:56; Jim Niosi, Ridgfield, pin Anthony Cicero, Bergen Tech, 1:15; Jason Kosson, Tenafly, dec. Jared Vassalo, Pascack Hills, 12-4; Steven Hurley, Garfield, pin Dennis McSweeney, Lyndhurst, 2:45; Min Chi, Rutherford, pin Carmine Franconia, Paramus Catholic, 1:32; Fokas pin David Sayers, Pascack Valley, 4:36.

130 pounds

Mitz Sumilang, Ridgfield Park, pin Sam Kim, Fort Lee, 0:40; Kevin Tryanowski, Lodi, def. Phil Brill-Edwards, Dwight-Englewood, 5-0; Stefano Tortora, Emerson, pin Derrick Johnston, Ridgewood, 2:16; Basile dec. Ryan Burdette, Westwood, 10-8; Pat Ronayne, Glen Rock, dec. Jon Scoble, NV/Old Tappan, 14-1; Matt Kenny, Northern Highlands, pin Robert Kinzelmann, Mahwah, 1:42; Chris Bitetto, Hackensack, pin Jeff Esposito, Saddle Brook, 0:23; Jamie Wagner, Ramsey, dec. Steve Johnston, Pascack Valley, 11-7; John Lauerback, NV/Demarest, pin Norman Clausen, Cresskill, 5:06; Cunningham dec. Frank Petrucci, Don Bosco Prep, 7-5; Jeff Clark, Bogota, pin Dan Uriarte, Garfield, 3:04; Dan McDonnell, Indian Hills, pin Jason Rubine, North Bergen, 0:45; Chris Merzeau, St. Joseph Regional, dec. Morgan Horner, Hasbrouck Heights, 17-10; Pete August, Bergenfield, pin Jason Edelman, Elmwood Park, 3:06; Justin Gooch, Bergen Catholic, pin Justin McDougall, Ramapo, 2:48; Rich Santana, Paramus, pin Denilson Porto, Cliffside Park, 0:41.

135 pounds

Norgaard pin Moran, 0:51; An dec. Kim, 4-3; Spi-lewski dec. Rossi, 13-4; Zajecik pin Jeff Imperatto, Elmwood Park, 3:35; O'Hara pin Snyder, 0:31; Gribben dec. Mike Ervelli, Rutherford, 9-4; Dave Ramirez, Bergen Tech, Karamitas, 6-4; Moreng pin Scaglione, 1:11.

140 pounds

Justin Frohlich, Pascack Hills, pin Billy Schaller, Dwt.-Englewood, 0:34; Joe Ragan, Indian Hills, def. Steve Kotatis, New Milford, 13-12; Paul Seimon, Don Bosco Prep, def. Jim Tessaro, Cresskill, 13-8; Joe Chermark, Lodi, def. Keith Gehshan, Pascack Valley, 4-1; Mark Matri, N. Highlands, pin Rich Bruno, Emerson, 3:03; Palmer Smith, Ridgewood, pin Andrew Clyne, Glen Rock, 3:35; Tony Kim, NV/Old Tappan, pin Ed Surri, Elmwood Park, 3:00; Matt Moralez, Leonia, def. Mike Rothman, River Dell, 8-5; Frank Urgo, Saddle Brook, def. Igor Martillosian, Cliffside Park, 14-8; John Smith, St. Joseph Reg., pin Pete Sankowich, Midland Park, 5:22; Jay Bille, Hasbrouck Heights, pin James Dolci, Paramus Catholic, 3:48; Mark Reisman, Ridgfield Park, pin Anton Schaller, Bergen Tech, 0:14; T.J. Rinaldi, Mahwah, pin Deve Seitel, NV/Demarest, 0:31; Adriatik Bajrushli, Westwood, pin Phil Maf-fetoso, Bogota, 1:55; John Buonocore, St. Mary's, def. Ed Bejian, Dumont, 6-4 (OT); Aashon Larkins, Hackensack, pin Anthony Servis, Ridgfield, 2:23.

145 pounds

Mark Galorezo, Bergen Catholic, dec. Mike Quinn, River Dell, 8-1; Andrew Marchetto-Ryan, Midland Park, injury def. over Nick Granito, Emerson; Rob Vadala, Cresskill, dec. Joe Carmichael, Fair Lawn, 11-2; Brian Klefer, Mahwah, pin Jason Eckhardt, Tenafly, 3:41; Paul Pellegrino, Northern Highlands, pin John Paul Grippa, Don Bosco, 3:04; Mike Kerbe, Ridgfield Park, dec. Reginald Gaeles, Teaneck, 14-11; Mike Jemal, Glen Rock, dec. Mark Radolan, Fort Lee, 7-5; Ralph Denisco, Pascack Hills, pin Matt Romeo, St. Joseph, 1:54.

152 pounds

DiBlasi, Ramsey, dec. Watson, Cresskill, 6-2; Hernandez, Cliffside Park, pin Villoslada, Leonia, 1:32; D'Andrea, NV/Old Tappan, pin Andrull, Garfield, 3:41; Menzel, Ridgfield Park, dec. Pazian, Dumont, 10-7; Chung, Fort Lee, pin Daniel, Emerson, 2:52; Winters, Pascack Hills, pin Murtaugh, Westwood, 1:04; Gonzalez, North Bergen, dec. Tryforos, Glen Rock, 13-0; Collier, Bergen Catholic, pin Kearns, Lyndhurst, 1:36.

160 pounds

Brad Christle, Fort Lee, pin Joe Liberta, Becton, 1:18; Evan Golden, Fair Lawn, pin Eric Morgan, River Dell, 4:50; Kevin McKernan, Westwood, pin Nick Matthews, 1:36; Chris Tedesco, Ridgfield, dec. Brendan Behr, Ramapo, 7-5; Anthony Salomon, Cliffside Park, pin Roman Duffy, Dumont, 4:15; Bryan DeSousa, Don Bosco Prep, tech. fall Picknitch, New Milford, 15-0; Brian Gehshan, Pascack Valley, dec. Ron Galarza, Rutherford, 14-6; Pat Festa, Saddle Brook, dec. Mike Cook, Bergen Catholic, 8-4; Ray Meyer, Hasb. Heights, pin Joe Cocuzza, Emerson, 1:44; Andres Ortega, Bergen Tech, pin Bob Reiley, Mahwah, 3:40; Sam Dubinski, No. Highlands, dec. Derek Bruno, Elmwood Park, 13-5; Joel Manning, Pascack Hills, pin Ryan Goodman, Dwight-Englewood, 1:32; Hovesp Grigorian, Garfield, pin Zach Hassal, Bogota, 2:11; Adam Mutchler, NV/Old Tappan, dec. Bill Careri, Ramsey, 13-3; Donal Gillespie, Palsades Park, pin Jeff Ramirez, Lodi, 1:30; Chris Laterra, St. Joseph Reg., tech. fall Ed Byron, Paramus, 24-9.

171 pounds

Bassett, Paramus, tech. fall Vecchione, Westwood, 20-4; Brian Hutchinson, Dumont, pin Desimini, Waldwick, 3:58; Mulhern, Emerson, pin Frush, Northern Highlands, 5:05; Herb Thomas, St. Joseph Reg., by dsq over Christian, Ramsey; Sica, Lyndhurst, pin Man-jiklan, Lodi, 0:32; Lada, Elmwood Park, dec. Sentipal, Hasbrouck Heights, 10-9; Tedesco, Ridgfield, pin Quatrin, Tenafly, 1:11; Mormila, NV/Demarest, pin Gutin, River Dell, 0:33.

169 pounds

Marquez, Rutherford, pin Michael Spinner, Don Bosco, 0:22; Santoli, Bergen Catholic, tech. fall Shel-ton, Ridgfield Park, 24-9; Sam Elsamra, Cliffside Park, pin Healy, Lodi, 0:34; Yucis, Fair Lawn, pin Koller, Garfield, 3:27; Arthur Haberberger, Palsades Park, dec. Hinzpeter, NV/Old Tappan, 16-7; Ponzini, Paramus, pin Malatino, Ramsey, 0:29; Burrell, Hackensack, dec. Dan Carrino, Leonia, 12-2; Cutruzzula, St. Joseph Reg., pin Tuculescu, Ridgewood, 0:33.

215 pounds

Vince Ciurciu, St. Joseph Reg., pin Cummins, Pascack Valley, 2:25; Ken Edmondson, NV/Demarest, pin Horton, Fort Lee, 1:08; Lapolla, Bergen Catholic, dec.

Whitney, NV/Old Tappan, 13-5; Good, Indian Hills, pin Rotundo, North Bergen, 1:46; Jeff Steidl, Paramus, pin Compellito, Midland Park, 1:54; Greenberg, Northern Highlands, dec. Burke, St. Mary's, 19-6; Per-eira, Saddle Brook, pin Ressler, Hackensack, 1:44; Aristakesian, Garfield, pin Van Overloop, Emerson, 1:37.

275 pounds

Bryant Robinson, Hackensack, pin Rizzo, Waldwick, 3:01; Finelli, NV/Demarest, pin Yucis, Fair Lawn, 3:32; John Currid, Pascack Hills, pin Albanese, Palsades Park, 4:43; Pakovics, Rutherford, pin Collaro, Garfield, 4:09; Poulicacos, Cresskill, pin Havens, Dumont, 0:41; Balsamo, River Dell, dec. Taylor, Northern Highlands, 3-2; Hicks, Indian Hills, pin Milder, Fort Lee, 0:47; Edgar Puzio, St. Joseph, pin Cannizzaro, Lodi, 1:22.

SECOND ROUND

119 pounds

Bergmann pin Gallione, 4:42; Von Houten by disq. over Ceccacci; Mezzadri dec. English, 14-4; Villalba pin Heron, 1:11; Labrosse pin Jasonos, 5:13; McLaren pin Viera, 1:59; Mnassian dec. Neff, 6-3; Ruiz pin Attardo, 1:37.

125 pounds

Brizzi tech. fall Graf, 15-0, 5:56; Corressio pin Klapper, 1:50; Massenzio dec. Klaus, 5-0; Chiaromonte, pin Koh, 2:58; DiDomenico dec. Shaban, 9-4; Niosi pin Diaz, 0:48; Hurley dec. Kosson, 17-5; Fokas pin Chi, 0:36.

130 pounds

Sumilang tech fall Tryanowski, 15-0, 4:00; Tortora dec. Basile, 4-2; Kenny dec. Ronayne, 13-6; Bitetto pin Wagner, 4:23; Lauerback dec. Cunningham, 11-0; Clark dec. McDonnell, 19-8; Merzeau pin August, 0:34; Gooch dec. Santana, 6-5.

130 pounds

Frohlich tech. fall Ragan, 6:00; Seimon def. Cher-mark, 16-1; Palmer Smith by injury default; Moralez dec. Kim, 19-10; Urgo dec. John Smith, 11-5; Reisman by default; Bajrushli dec. Rinaldi, 9-3; Larkins pin Buonocore, 2:47.

160 pounds

Christie, Fort Lee, pin Golden, Fair Lawn, 2:00; Tedesco, Ridgfield, pin Kevin McKernan, Westwood, 4:23; DeSousa, Don Bosco Prep, pin Salomon, Cliffside Park, 3:37; Festa, Saddle Brook, pin Gehshan, Pascack Valley, 2:46; Meyer, Hasb. Heights, pin Reiley, Mahwah, 1:33; Manning, Pascack Hills, dec. Dubinski, No. Highlands, 8-6; Mutchler, NV/Old Tappan, pin Grigorian, Garfield, 3:11; Laterra, St. Joseph Reg., pin Gillespie, Palsades Park, 1:10.

FIRST-ROUND WRESTLEBACKS

103 — Ken Chu, River Dell, pin Eric Campagna, Pascack Hills, 0:43; Ron Palmieri, North Bergen, dec. Jason Fink, Paramus, 4-3.

112 — Mike Montelth, Ramsey, dec. Ronnie Porto, Palsades Park, 5-4; Grant DellaTorre, River Dell, won by forfeit over Kurt Haas, Northern Highlands.

119 — Rich Van Houten, Northern Highlands, pin Victor Villalba, Dumont, 3:48; Vicken Mnassian, Westwood, dec. Adam McLaren, Pascack Hills, 5-1.

125 — Steven Hurley, Garfield, pin Jim Niosi, Ridgfield, 4:25; Mike Massenzio, St. Joseph, dec. Bob Correggio, Bergenfield, 4-0.

130 — Stefano Tortora, Emerson/Park Ridge, dec. Matt Kenny, Northern Highlands, 8-2; Chris Merzeau, St. Joseph, dec. Jeff Clark, Bogota, 17-6.

135 — Ed An, Demarest, dec. Justin Zajecik, Ridgfield Park, 14-4; Tim O'Hara, Ridgfield, dec. Dave Ramirez, Bergen Tech, 20-9.

140 — Paul Seimon, Don Bosco Prep, by forfeit over Palmer Smith, Ridgewood; Adriatik Bajrushli, Westwood, pin Frank Urgo, Saddle Brook, 4:35.

145 — Andrew Marchetto-Ryan, Midland Park, dec. Brian Klefer, Mahwah, 6-2; Mike Jemal, Glen Rock, pin Mike Kerbe, Ridgfield Park, 4:57.

152 — Zeke Hernandez, Cliffside Park, pin Mike D'Andrea, Old Tappan, 1:39; Idaldo Gonzalez, North Bergen, dec. Mike Chung, Fort Lee, 15-4.

160 — Joel Manning, Pascack Hills, pin Adam Mutchler, Old Tappan, 1:39; Pat Festa, Saddle Brook, dec. Chris Tedesco, Ridgfield, 9-5.

171 — Paul Lada, Elmwood Park, pin Kevin Tedesco, Ridgfield, 0:53; Brian Hutchinson, Dumont, by disqualification over Herb Thomas, St. Joseph.

189 — Nick Ponzini, Paramus, pin Alrick Burrell, Hackensack, 2:33; Dominick Santoli, Bergen Catholic, dec. Ed Yucis, Fair Lawn, 10-4.

215 — Jeff Steidl, Paramus, dec. Vic Pereria, Saddle Brook, 11-6; Kyle Good, Indian Hills, dec. Ken Edmondson, Demarest, 15-3.

275 — Lou Pakovics, Rutherford, pin Jarrod Finelli, Demarest, 0:50; Nick Poulicacos, Cresskill, pin T.J. Hicks, Indian Hills, 1:44.

12/28/1997

Sunday

Feb
1998**QUARTERFINALS****103 pounds**

Germakian dec. Chu, 8-4; Lee pin Campagna, 1:25; McDonnell pin Palmieri, 2:59; Taylor dec. Fink, 9-3.

112 pounds

Salmond tech. fall Porto, 18-1, 4:37; Palo pin Monteith, 2:29; Sassaman dec. Haas, 5-1; Kraycinovich dec. Dellatorre, 9-2.

119 pounds

Bergmann, dec. VanHouten, 6-5; Mezzadri dec. Villalba, 14-4; Labrosse dec. McLaren, 3-2; Ruiz pin Minassian, 2:42.

125 pounds

Brizzi dec. Coreggio, 11-1; Chiaramonte dec. Massenzio, 5-4; DiDomenico pin Niosi, 1:26; Fokas pin Hurlley, 0:51.

130 pounds

Sumiliang pin Tortora, 3:50; Bitetto dec. Kenny, 10-7; Lauterback dec. Clark, 8-3; Gooch dec. Merzeau, 11-6.

135 pounds

Norgaard pin An, 1:54; Spilewski pin Zajeck, 4:09; Gribben dec. O'Hara, 12-3; Moreng pin Ramirez, Bergen Tech, 0:22.

140 pounds

Frohlich dec. Selmon, 9-8; Morales pin Smith, 5:02; Reisman pin Urgo, 4:31; Larkins dec. Bajrushli, 16-11.

145 pounds

Galorenzo pin Marchetto-Ryan, 2:14; Vadala def. Keifer, 12-3; Pellegrino pin Kerbe, 2:25; Denisco pin Jamal, 3:03.

152 pounds

DiBlasi, dec. Hernandez, 16-9; Menzel dec. D'Andrea, 8-4; Winters pin Chung, 1:14; Collier dec. Gonzalez, 13-0.

160 pounds

Christie pin Tedesco, 3:16; DeSousa dec. Festa, 10-6; Meyer dec. Manning, 10-3; Laterra dec. Mutchler, 19-4.

171 pounds

Bassett pin Hutchinson, 5:17; Mulhern pin Thomas, 4:37; Sica pin Lada, 2:59; Mormile pin Tedesco, 0:32.

189 pounds

Marquez pin Santoli, 3:05; Elsamra dec. Yuclis, 12-2; Haberberger pin Ponzini, 2:30; Cutruzzula pin Burrell, 1:57.

215 pounds

Ciurciu pin Edmondson, 3:09; Lapolla pin Good, 5:08; Greenberg pin Steidl, 3:53; Aristakesian pin Pereira, 1:47.

275 pounds

Robinson dec. Finelli, 14-7; Currid dec. Pakovics, 5-4 (OT); Balsamo pin Poulicakos, 2:58; Puzio pin Hicks, 1:19.

SEMIFINALS

103 — David Germakian, Pascack Valley, pin Sungil Lee, Leonia, 1:25; Chris McDonnell, Indian Hills, dec. Dan Taylor, St. Joseph, 9-4.

112 — Mike Palo, St. Joseph, dec. Dave Salmond, Garfield, 5-1; Mark Sassaman, Bergen Catholic, dec. Mike Kraycinovich, Pascack Hills, 9-1.

119 — Andrew Bergmann, Fair Lawn, pin Justin Mezzadri, Pascack Valley, 5:13; Oliver Ruiz, Cliffside Park, pin Justin Labrosse, Hackensack, 2:51.

125 — Chris Brizzi, Ramsey, dec. Paul Chiaramonte, Elmwood Park, 5-3; Nick Fokas, Bergen Catholic, pin Rob DiDomenico, Lodi, 3:16.

130 — Chris Bitetto, Hackensack, dec. Mitz Sumiliang, Ridgefield Park, 13-8; John Lauderback, Demarest, dec. Justin Gooch, Bergen Catholic, 12-2.

135 — Erik Norgaard, St. Joseph, pin Mike Spilewski, Old Tappan, 3:28; Jesse Moreng, Northern Highlands, pin Donald Gribben, Don Bosco Prep, 2:52.

140 — Justin Frohlich, Pascack Hills, pin Matt Moralez, Leonia, 1:03; Aashon Larkins, Hackensack, dec. Mark Reisman, Ridgefield Park, 14-6.

145 — Mark Galorenzo, Bergen Catholic, dec. Rob Vadala, 10-3; Paul Pellegrino, Northern Highlands, dec. Ralph Denisco, Pascack Hills, 4-2.

152 — Phil DeBlasi, Ramsey, pin Chris Menzel, Ridgefield Park, 2:47; Kevin Collier, Bergen Catholic, dec. Dennis Winters, Pascack Hills, 14-0.

160 — Brad Christie, Fort Lee, pin Bryan Desousa, Don Bosco Prep, 10-6; Ray Meyer, Hasbrouck Heights, dec. Chris Laterra, St. Joseph, 12-5.

171 — Mike Bassett, Paramus, pin John Mulhern, Emerson/Park Ridge, 0:29; Joe Mormile, Demarest, pin Adam Sica, Lyndhurst, 2:56.

189 — Harry Marquez, Rutherford, dec. Sammy Elsamra, Cliffside Park, 13-6; Joe Cutruzzula, St. Joseph, pin Arthur Haberberger, Palsades Park, 3:47.

215 — Vince Ciurciu, St. Joseph, dec. Nick Lapolla, Bergen Catholic, 9-8; Matt Greenberg, Northern Highlands, dec. Harry Aristakesian, Garfield, 13-3.

275 — John Currid, Pascack Hills, dec. Bryant Robinson, Hackensack, 10-6; Bob Balsamo, River Dell, dec. Edgar Puzio, St. Joseph, 10-6.

Bergen Coaches tournament**At Paramus****FINALS**

103 — David Germakian, Pascack Valley, dec. Chris McDonnell, Indian Hills, 3-1.

112 — Mike Palo, St. Joseph, dec. Mark Sassmann, Bergen Catholic, 12-3.

119 — Oliver Ruiz, Cliffside Park, dec. Andrew Bergmann, Fair Lawn, 12-6.

125 — Chris Brizzi, Ramsey, dec. Nick Fokas, Bergen Catholic, 5-3.

130 — Chris Bitetto, Hackensack, dec. John Lauderback, NV/Demarest, 8-5.

135 — Eric Norgaard, St. Joseph Reg., dec. Jesse Moreng, Northern Highlands, 5-3.

140 — Justin Frohlich, Pascack Hills, dec. Aashon Larkins, Hackensack, 7-6.

145 — Paul Pellegrino, Northern Highlands, dec. Mark Galorenzo, Bergen Catholic, 7-3.

152 — Phil DeBlasi, Ramsey, dec. Kevin Collier, Bergen Catholic, 5-4.

160 — Brad Christie, Fort Lee, dec. Ray Meyer, Hasbrouck Heights, 4-2.

171 — Mike Bassett, Paramus, dec. Joe Mormile, NV/Demarest, 8-5.

189 — Harry Marquez, Rutherford, pin Joe Cutruzzula, St. Joseph Reg., 5:56.

215 — Vin Ciurciu, St. Joseph Reg., pin Matt Greenberg, Northern Highlands, 0:47.

275 — Bob Balsamo, River Dell, dec. John Currid, Pascack Hills, 14-6.

THIRD-PLACE CONSOLATIONS

103 — Dan Taylor, St. Joseph Reg., pin Sungil Lee, Leonia, 4:25.

112 — Dave Salmond, Garfield, dec. Mike Kraycinovich, Pascack Hills, 7-5.

119 — Justin Mezzadri, Pascack Valley, dec. Justin Labrosse, Hackensack, 8-7 (OT).

125 — Robert DiDomenico, Lodi, pin Paul Chiaramonte, Elmwood Park, 4:32.

130 — Mitz Sumiliang, Ridgefield Park, pin Justin Gooch, Bergen Catholic, 3:54.

135 — Mike Spilewski, NV/Old Tappan, dec. Donald Gribben, Don Bosco, 10-7.

140 — Mark Reisman, Ridgefield Park, dec. Matt Moralez, Leonia, 13-6.

145 — Ralph Denisco, Pascack Hills by forfeit over Rob Vadala, Cresskill.

152 — Dennis Winters, Pascack Hills, pin Chris Menzel, Ridgefield Park, 1:53.

160 — Chris Laterra, St. Joseph Reg., dec. Bryan DeSousa, Don Bosco, 17-7.

171 — John Mulhern, Emerson, dec. Adam Sica, Lyndhurst, 6-5.

189 — Arthur Haberberger, Palsades Park, dec. Sammy Elsamra, Cliffside Park, 11-5.

215 — Nicholas Lapolla, Bergen Catholic, dec. Harry Aristakesian, Garfield, 12-4.

275 — Edgar Puzio, St. Joseph Reg., dec. Bryant Robinson, Hackensack, 6-5.

FIFTH-PLACE CONSOLATIONS

103 — Chu, River Dell, dec. Palmieri, North Bergen, 8-3.

112 — Monteith, Ramsey, dec. DellaTorre, River Dell, 1-0.

119 — Van Houten, Northern Highlands, dec. Minassian, Westwood, 7-1.

125 — Massenzio, St. Joseph, dec. Steven Hurlley, Garfield, 7-1.

130 — Tortora, Emerson/Park Ridge, dec. Merzeau, St. Joseph, 6-2.

135 — An, Demarest, dec. O'Hara, Ridgefield, 6-4.

140 — Selmon, Don Bosco Prep, dec. Bajrushli, Westwood, 9-3.

145 — Jemal, Glen Rock, pin Marchetto-Ryan, Midland Park, 4:05.

152 — Hernandez, Cliffside Park, pin Gonzalez, North Bergen, 0:25.

160 — Manning, Pascack Hills, pin Festa, Saddle Brook, 2:04.

171 — Lada, Elmwood Park, maj. dec. Hutchinson, Dumont, 16-7.

189 — Santoli, Bergen Catholic, pin Ponzini, Paramus, 2:54.

215 — Steidl, Paramus, pin Good, Indian Hills, 1:54.

275 — Pakovics, Rutherford, pin Poulicakos, Cresskill, 3:59.

Bergen fresh championship**TEAM SCORES**

el2

Paramus, 122; Bergen Catholic, 100; Fair Lawn, 98; Indian Hills, 95; Leonia, 86; Dwight-Englewood, 78; Northern Highlands, 75½; Cresskill, 54; River Dell, 53½; Pascack Valley, 52; Hackensack, 51; North Bergen, 42; Waldwick, 42; Tenafly, 41½; NV/Old Tappan, 38; Ramapo, 30; Don Bosco Prep, 28; Ridgewood, 26½; Palsades Park, 25; Cliffside Park, 24; Bergenfield, 21; Garfield, 16; Mahwah, 12; Midland Park, 12; Bogota, 10; NV/Demarest, 8; Pascack Hills, 6; Saddle Brook, 5; Dumont, 4; Emerson/Park Ridge, 4; Paramus Catholic, 4; Teaneck, 0.

THIRD-PLACE CONSOLATION

93 — Matt Michaels, Northern Highlands, pin Mike Lazar, Fair Lawn, 1:10

103 — Mike Occhipinti, Pascack Valley, pin Jake Noy, Fair Lawn, 2:24

112 — Steve Maher, Bergenfield, dec. Dave Accosta, Cresskill, 3-2

119 — Kurt Haaf, Northern Highlands, pin Chris Falato, Paramus, 0:54

125 — Jeff Seidler, River Dell, pin Anthony Dillberto, NV/Old Tappan, 3:24

130 — Yura Yaguda, Palsades Park, pin Andrew Barskiy, Paramus, 1:42

135 — Ron Veldel, Fair Lawn, by forfeit over David Machinist, Dwight-Englewood.

140 — Andrew Sturzel, Bergen Catholic, pin Mike Sarreal, Cresskill, 0:30

145 — Leiland Streif, Bergen Catholic, pin Matt Rosenthal, Leonia, 2:12

152 — Mike Weaver, Indian Hills, pin Max Rosales, North Bergen, 2:12

160 — John Gennaro, Pascack Valley, pin Andy Stalter, River Dell, 2:50

171 — Ken Veras, North Bergen, pin Mike Iannuzzi, NV/Demarest, 0:38

189 — Chris Walczak, Ridgewood, pin Mike Spinner, Don Bosco Prep, 1:45

215 — Marlin Townes, Hackensack, pin T.J. Gannelli, Waldwick, 0:32

275 — Chris Jarosz, Bergen Catholic, dec. Ed Gordan, Midland Park, 10-1

CHAMPIONSHIP

93 — Will Vecchione, Paramus, pin Vinny Petreglia, Pascack Valley, 0:27

103 — Jared Majka, Ramapo, pin Joe Pedevill, Tenafly, 4:26

112 — Steve Becker, Fair Lawn, pin John Villosoba, Leonia, 3:15

119 — Chris Jasonos, Cresskill, pin Mike San Fillipo, Indian Hills, 1:38

125 — Matt Shaban, Indian Hills, dec. Aaron Salma, Fair Lawn, 12-5

130 — James Weck, Bergen Catholic, pin Gino Serafica, Leonia, 1:31

135 — George Tabbal, Dwight-Englewood, pin John Lavezzi, Paramus, 0:43

140 — Sean Flanagan, River Dell, dec. Jim Dalton, Leonia, 10-6

145 — Tom Osgoodby, Waldwick, pin Alex Park, NV/Old Tappan, 4:25

152 — Nissim Levy, Northern Highlands, pin Charles O'Hanlon, Cliffside Park, 3:11

160 — Ryan Goodman, Dwight-Englewood, pin Eric Eckhardt, Tenafly, 1:56

171 — John Kim, Dwight-Englewood, pin Ed Goegna, Garfield, 4:41

189 — Ryan Diorio, Indian Hills, pin Daifuki Hirata, Paramus, 4:36

215 — Anthony Buldo, Paramus, pin Anthony Carvilo, Bergen Catholic, 2:43

275 — Karon Singleton, Hackensack, pin Ian Lees, Northern Highlands, 0:33.

Most Outstanding Wrestler — Steve Becker, Fair Lawn

Definitely not one of the boys

By **RON FOX**
Staff Writer

It wasn't her intention to make history when Deirdre Mammano strode to the mat over the weekend.

"I think of myself as a wrestler; it never occurred to me that I'm a *girl wrestler*," says the Northern Valley at Old Tappan senior, who became the first female to compete in the Bergen County Coaches Holiday Wrestling Tournament in its 38-year history when she did battle in the 103-pound class Saturday.

To the surprise of the few who were at Paramus High School for the 10 a.m. preliminary-round bout, Mammano aggressively took a lead on Pascack Hills' Eric Campagna before losing in the closing seconds, 16-15.

"She was winning by four [points] with 15 seconds left, but she's new to the sport and doesn't know the ins and outs yet," says Northern Valley coach Tom Lebovich, suggesting that wrestlers in the know will sit on a lead at that

Old Tappan girl pins down dream

juncture. "Deirdre always goes 100 percent and she was still going for a headlock, looking to pin the kid when she got caught."

When Mammano decided to change sports two weeks prior to the winter season getting under way, many close to her were caught by surprise. She was an all-league and honorable mention All-Bergen County soccer player in the fall — playing either center forward or center midfield — and had run the distances in indoor and outdoor track.

"You're doing what?" friends asked.

"You want to try this? That's crazy," her father, Don, said as a reflex reaction before adding, "But if you do it, give it 100 percent

[and don't quit]."

The rookie wrestler grins. "My dad didn't think it would get this far. But he's very supportive."

Her brother, Don, a freshman wrestler, was uncomfortable at first about having his sister as a teammate, but since has accepted it, the family says.

The pioneering 17-year-old began to feel hers was the right decision when she mentioned her intentions in the fall to male friends who are members of the wrestling team. They recognized Mammano as an accomplished athlete.

"You'll be great," was a typical reaction. "You'll kill everybody."

And Mammano quickly proved she belonged — through her seriousness about the sport, a solid work ethic, and an ability to learn quickly. She has felt welcomed and encouraged from the start by the coaching staff and her teammates, and has heard no negative remarks from them.

See **WRESTLER** Page S-7

WRESTLER: A Bergen tourney pioneer

From Page S-1

Her decision was not of the overnight variety, the 5-foot-1 Mammano assures.

"My cousins and my older brother [Greg] wrestled, and just watching it always got my adrenalin pumping," she explains. "I always hated to see anybody getting pinned; I wanted to jump in there and help. I considered wrestling for a while last year, but this year I finally said, 'Yeah, I'll do it.'"

"I have 10 varsity letters and I want to get 12, but I wanted to do something different instead of running indoors again."

It helped that she knew Lebovich as a junior varsity soccer coach and has known assistant wrestling coach Doug Kuizema since she was in kindergarten. Lebovich said he'd have no problem with her trying out for the team.

"You'd better not have a problem with it," he remembers her saying with her determined smile.

So before each practice or match, Mammano changes into her uniform in the girls locker room. She has so little trouble making weight, she steps on the scale for weigh-ins wearing a sweatsuit.

"The first practices were rough, but the coaches have been so supportive; they give me energy," she says. "And my teammates have plenty of patience with me as I learn."

Referring to herself as a tomboy who began playing soccer and softball as a tot, Mammano says wrestling has opened her eyes. "Every one of my muscles, including a lot of muscles I never knew I had, are in tone now. I felt in good shape in soccer, but wrestling puts you in the best shape."

Of her County loss, she says, "It's a nightmare, but I have to learn from it. I'm a senior in school, but a freshman in the sport."

"I told her she's our 103-pound varsity wrestler because she's the best we have, and for no other reason," Lebovich says. "She's a tough kid and she won wrestle-offs over our returning varsity 103. As far as I know, she's the only female wrestling in a varsity lineup in Bergen County, and

she doesn't feel it's a big deal.

"This sport is not for every woman. But it's not for every man either."

She's 0-2 so far, and goes for her first win Jan. 7 at Ramapo.

Wrestling may prove to be a one-year experience for Mammano, who may have collegiate offers for track, having run a 5-minute 20-second mile last year. But between wrestling and college lies the spring season and probably another surprise, though not as dramatic as her winter change of pace.

"I've run outdoors three years, but actually, I want to try softball next," Mammano says with a laugh. "Something different."

ED HILL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Northern Valley's Deirdre Mammano: "I think of myself as a wrestler; it never occurred to me that I'm a girl wrestler."



ED HILL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Deirdre Mammano, a senior at Northern Valley at Old Tappan,
working out with teammate Patrick Morrison at wrestling practice.



Stars new and old to shine at Bergen event

By **RON FOX**

Staff Writer

12/23/97

One of the greatest early season challenges in the nation takes place at one of its largest county high school tournaments. The Bergen County Coaches Holiday tournament, with 48 teams taking part, figures to have enormous competition in all 14 weight classes.

Here's a rundown of the names coaches are mentioning as they prepare for Saturday's 10 a.m. start of the two-day event at Paramus High School. Athletes are listed in the class in which they are most likely to wrestle:

103 — David Germakian (Pascack Valley), second last year; Anthony Barber (Garfield), Chris McDonnell (Indian Hills), with Luis Lopez (Ridgefield Park) the sleeper.

112 — Ryan Hult (Pascack Valley), fresh off a win over State fourth-place finisher Sam Chey last weekend; Mark Sassamann (Bergen Catholic), last year's County 103 winner over Germakian; Dave Salmond (Garfield); Mike Kraycinovich (Pascack Hills), Rich Van Houten (Northern Highlands), Dan McDonnell (Indian Hills); and Fair Lawn freshman Steven Becker as the sleeper.

119 — Andrew Bergmann (Fair Lawn); Vicken Minassian (Westwood), who was third in a loaded Kearny tournament weight class Saturday; and Tom Murgolo (St. Joseph) the sleeper.

125 — Returning 112 champ Chris Brizzi (Ramsey), second in the Cadet Nationals, and returning 119 champ Nick Fokas (Bergen Catholic); Rob DiDomenico (Lodi), Oliver Ruiz (Cliffside Park), John Lauterback (Northern Valley at Demarest); Rich Santana (Paramus),

with Matt Kenny (No. Highlands) the sleeper.

130 — Mitz Sumilang (Ridgefield Park), unless he goes higher; freshman Justin Gooch (BC), Chris Merzeau (St. Joseph), with County freshman champ Frank Petrucci (Don Bosco Prep) the sleeper.

135 — Returning champions Erik Norgaard (St. Joseph) at 125 and Jesse Moreng (No. Highlands) at 135; Tim O'Hara (Ridgefield), Justin Gavijian (BC), Mark Reisman (Ridgefield Park), and freshman Chris Bitetto (Hackensack) the sleeper.

140 — Runner-up Justin Frohlich (Pascack Hills), Mark Matri (No. Highlands), Aashon Larkins (Hackensack).

145 — Paul Pellegrino (No. Highlands), Mark Galorenzo (BC), Randy Calderio (Garfield), Nick Granito (Emerson/Park Ridge), Ralph Denisco (Pascack Hills).

152 — Phil DeBiasi (Ramsey), Dennis Winters (Pascack Hills), Kevin Collier (BC), Kris Menzel (Ridgefield Park), and Idaldo Gonzalez (No. Bergen) the sleeper.

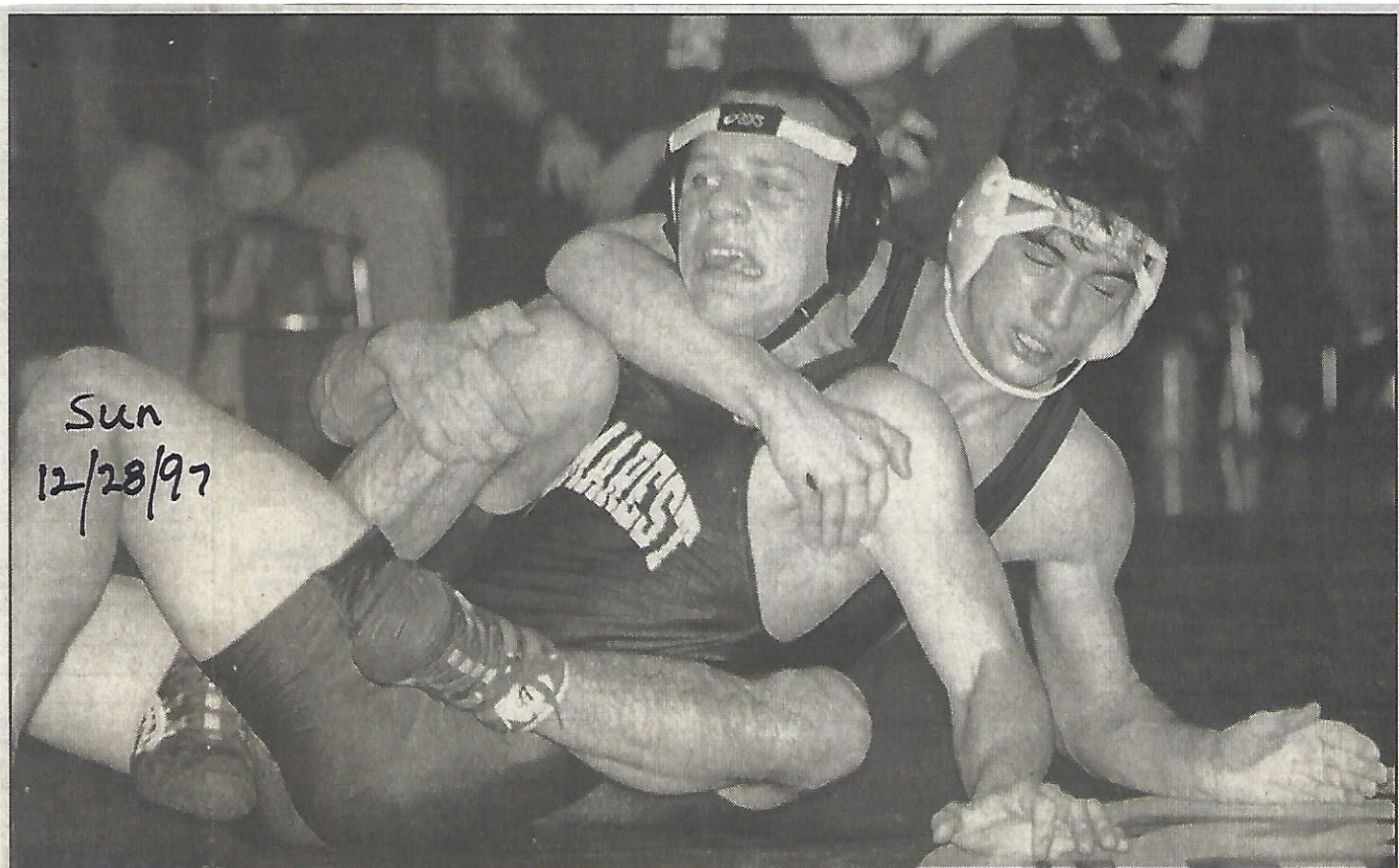
160 — Brad Christie (Fort Lee), third in the summer Cadet Nationals; County runner-up Ray Meyer (Hasbrouck Heights, Chris Laterra (St. Joseph), Joel Manning (Pascack Hills), with Pat Festa (Saddle Brook) the sleeper.

171 — Mike Bassett (Paramus), the returning champion at this weight; John Mulhern (Emerson/Park Ridge), Mark Christian (Ramsey), Joe Mormile (Demarest), Austin Wall (Indian Hills), with Andre Thomas (Teaneck) the sleeper.

189 — Kyle Good (Indian Hills); Joe Cutruzzulo (St. Joseph), Harry Marquez (Rutherford), Arthur Haberberger (Palisades Park), with Dom Santoli (BC) the sleeper.

215 — Vince Ciurciu (St. Joseph), Nick LaPolla (BC), last year's runner-up Harry Aristakesian (Garfield), Jeff Steidl (Paramus), Matt Greenberg (No. Highlands), with Marc Amatucci (Rutherford) the sleeper. LaPolla is up a weight class because teammate John Galan, second last year, is injured.

275 — Edgar Puzio (St. Joseph), Bob Balsamo (River Dell), Bryant Robinson (Hackensack), Bill Taylor (No. Highlands).



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Chris Bitetto of Hackensack working on putting Northern Valley at Demarest's John Lauderback on his back in the 130 final.

PH's Currid posts heavyweight upset

Sun Dec 27, 1997

PARAMUS — John Currid's quickness and ability to get down and around made his defeat of the top-seeded heavyweight possible Sunday in the Bergen County Coaches Association Holiday Wrestling Tournament semifinals.

The Pascack Hills junior began his 10-6 win over Hackensack's Bryant Robinson with a snap down and spin for the first in a series of takedowns — mostly of the spin variety and sometimes including underhooks.

Only three top seeds did not make it into the evening's final round. At 112 pounds, St. Joseph's unseeded freshman, Mike Palo, downed Garfield's Dave Salmond, 5-1, by opening with a double-leg takedown and three times foiling a strong single-leg lift by Salmond. When Salmond chose the defensive position for the second period, Palo scored two points with a half-nelson that pulled the returning regional champion to his back.

And at 130 pounds, another upstart freshman moved into the finals. Chris Bitetto of Hackensack scored a 13-8 decision over returning State bronze medalist Mitz Sumilang of Ridgefield Park. Bitetto broke an 8-all tie by popping out of what seemed to be a secure headlock, scoring a reversal to start the third period, and following with a headlock of his own for two back points. One more headlock had equal importance — Bitetto popped out of one in the closing seconds to preserve his victory.

Six No. 2 seeds also fell. At 103

SEMIFINALS

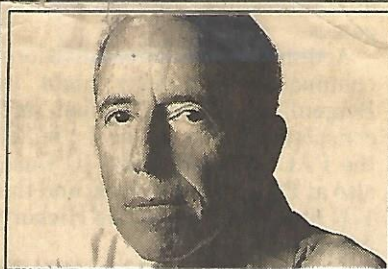
pounds, Chris McDonnell of Indian Hills used a duck-under and lift to complete his 9-4 win over St. Joseph's Dan Taylor. At 112, Bergen Catholic's returning champion, Mark Sassaman, decisioned Mike Kracynovich of Pascack Hills, 9-1, with duck-unders and a head-and-far leg.

Northern Highlands' Paul Pellegrino (145) used an early takedown to build a 3-0 lead and captured a 4-2 win despite a late reversal by Ralph Denisco of Pascack Hills. Ray Meyer of Hasbrouck Heights topped Chris Laterra of St. Joseph, 12-5, at 160 pounds, also starting with a duck-under. Meyer anchored with both legs and applied a 2-on-1 lock for tilt points.

At 215 pounds, sixth-seeded Matt Greenberg of Northern Highlands, who pinned third-seeded Jeff Steidl of Paramus on Saturday, scored a 13-3 win over No. 2 Harry Aristakesian of Garfield. The key was a five-point head-and-leg takedown to the back for a 7-2 lead.

And at heavyweight, River Dell's Bob Balsamo — the only other wrestler to defeat Hackensack's Robinson — earned his championship bout with Currid by pulling out a 10-6 decision over No. 2-ranked Edgar Puzio of St. Joseph. An ankle-pick takedown and back points turned it around for Balsamo.

— RON FOX



BOB KURLAND
HIGH SCHOOLS

Powley's life spoke volumes

High school sports lost a great supporter Friday when **Bill Powley** died at the age of 70. Throughout his life he stayed close to the athletes whether it was as one of the most highly successful boys soccer coaches or running the great Bergen County holiday wrestling tournament or umpiring baseball or just hanging out in gyms.

When he was coaching soccer in the 1960s he was always badgering this newspaper to provide more coverage of the sport. This was during the days the big three — baseball, basketball, and football — dominated the sports pages.

After retiring from coaching soccer at Teaneck in 1979 with a 255-117-62 career record, he worked for the Teaneck athletic department. During the basketball season you could always find him around the ticket table. And when I would arrive to cover a game, his loud, shattering voice would bellow: "The Bergen Record is here. What's the occasion?" Teenagers would jump at the voice. And then he would shout out my name and I would try slithering into the gym.

Bill loved to bark but would never bite.

Bill Carbone agrees with that: "He acted like a tough, rough guy, but he really was a warm, caring person."

Carbone remembers him well. "When I first started coaching [soccer] at Glen Rock, he took me under his wing and was my mentor. In fact my first scrimmage as coach was against Teaneck and we did that every year. I believe the only time I coached against him [in an official game] was in the Bergen County tournament and he beat me, 2-1. We remained friends through the years, and working with him was always a great experience."

And if somehow Bill Powley is reading this, I can hear him shouting, "What's so important?" The answer is "YOU!"

Holiday tourney boasts depth

BY RON FOX
Staff Writer

12/26/1997

WRESTLING

When 48 teams come together for the Bergen County Coaches Holiday wrestling tournament today and Sunday, a few lesser-known units might step forward to make a name for themselves.

Coaches are talking up a number of individuals from Indian Hills and Northern Highlands as having strong chances to win titles or at least medal. And each of those Northern Bergen Interscholastic League teams has so many highly regarded individuals that their teams suddenly are thrust into the role of team-championship contenders.

"It's good to see, because it shows how good wrestling is in Bergen County now," said Kerry Kohlheffer, coach of St. Joseph, which could be challenged by Highlands and Indian Hills for the Group 3 title that his Green Knights have won three straight years. "A lot of teams have been working hard to be strong."

The committee that directs the tournament has designed a thorough seeding

process with 21 criteria that helps seed the monstrous event. The criteria are as follows and are based on the 1996-97 season only:

1. State champion.
2. State silver medalist.
3. State bronze medalist.
4. State fourth-place finisher.
5. State fifth-sixth level.
6. Region champion.
7. Region runner-up.
8. Holiday Tournament champion.
9. Region third.
10. Holiday runner-up.
11. District champion.
12. Holiday third.
13. Holiday fourth.
14. Region fourth.
15. District runner-up.
16. Holiday fifth.
17. Holiday sixth.
18. District third plus a first-round region win.
19. District third but no region win.
20. A wrestler who did not wrestle the previous season but had a criteria-type season the prior season.
21. Bergen County freshman champion in 1996.

Each school is allowed one wild card, the nomination of a wrestler who does not fit any of the criteria but has impressive credentials from last season or previous

seasons.

Defending Group 4 and overall champion Bergen Catholic has six criteria wrestlers back, and Hackensack has five. Defending in Group 3, St. Joseph Regional has seven meeting criteria. However, competing with the Green Knights are Northern Highlands with nine criteria wrestlers and Indian Hills with six.

In Group 2, 1996 champion Lyndhurst has dropped down to Group 1. Both Garfield and Ridgefield Park have six wrestlers to be seeded. In Group 1, Hasbrouck Heights defends, but the depth might not be there this time. Lyndhurst has lost most of the wrestlers who piled up the points in winning Group 2 and placing fourth overall last year.

SCHEDULE

At PARAMUS H.S.

Today

Preliminaries, 10 a.m.; quarterfinals, 7 p.m.

Sunday

Wrestlebacks, 11 a.m.; followed by fifth-sixth consolation and semifinals; third-fourth consolation, 5:30 p.m.; championships, 7 p.m.

A-10 THE RECORD

OBITUARY

William Powley, 70; top soccer coach

By GREGORY SCHUTTA
Staff Writer

William Powley, the high school soccer coach with the most wins in Bergen County history and one of the men who built the Bergen County Holiday Wrestling Tournament into the largest of its kind in the country, died Friday at the age of 70.

"He was gruff and hard-nosed, but he had a genuine concern for the kids," said George Jockish, who took over the reins of the holiday tournament from Coach Powley in 1985.



POWLEY

The Harrington Park and former Hillsdale resident posted 255 wins in 24 years as head coach of the Teaneck High School boys' soccer team. His teams won nine North-

ern New Jersey Interscholastic League (NNJIL) titles and one Group 4 state title while enjoying 20 consecutive winning seasons from 1956 to 1975.

"Bill wasn't even a soccer player," said Joe Cervino Sr., the athletic director at Teaneck High School during Coach Powley's tenure. "He never even played in high school. He learned the game through clinics and seminars, and his teams were always extremely disciplined and very well-coached."

He also was Teaneck's assistant wrestling coach under Charlie Gunner, and in 1960 they came up with the idea of holding a county wrestling tournament over the winter break. In 19 years as the director, Coach Powley presided over its growth from an eight-team tournament to the largest high school tourney in the country in terms of teams entered.

"You've got to admire Bill for being able to handle that," Jockish said. "He was able to get around

the problems of blizzards and finding gyms and finding officials to work it. It was his baby, his tournament. He was a perfectionist, but he always tried to do the most for the kids."

And for the people around him. "He was famous for these huge Christmas parties," Jockish said. "So in the midst of running this obscenely huge wrestling tournament, he'd hold this Christmas party for coaches and officials and staff and ex-athletes and what have you. He'd decorate the house himself with seven million Santas, and he was a Santa type of guy, huge and jocular. He was a Damon Runyonesque type of figure."

Coach Powley is survived by his wife, the former Eleanor Runge. Visiting hours are Sunday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at the Becker Funeral Home, Westwood. There will be a service at 10:30 a.m. Monday at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Old Tappan. Memorial gifts to the church would be appreciated.

Fri, Dec 26, 1997

A year's work goes into a weekend of wrestling

Plans for the coming Bergen County wrestling tournament have been in the works for longer than anyone might guess. For director **George Jockish** — at the helm for the 13th consecutive year as the tournament enters its 38th edition Saturday — it is practically a year-round preparation that makes one of the nation's largest tournaments run so smoothly.

"In February or March the committee meets to discuss any recommendations for improving the tournament," says Jockish, the former North Bergen wrestling coach who resides in Paramus. There are 10 permanent members of the committee, plus one active coach from each of the six leagues that house Bergen teams, and representatives from the officials' association and the Bergen County Coaches Association's executive committee.

A total of 48 teams will make this edition the largest in tournament history — Wood-Ridge being the only County team not involved. North Bergen is the lone outside school involved. In the past, schools from Passaic County such as Passaic Valley and Wayne Valley were involved but dropped out.

"We always made it clear that as long as they wanted to stay, no one

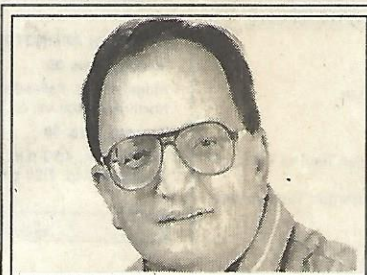
would throw them out," says Jockish, who intimated that once out, there's no return for non-Bergen schools.

Jockish came in when he gave up coaching, volunteering to help **Sal Cascio** and the late **Bill Powley** as they formulated their annual plans. It was a chance to remain active in the sport. Jockish quickly became entrenched in the planning — when he wasn't officiating matches.

There are the more than 50 on-site workers each year who also make it all come together. But that's not to say the experience has been without nightmares. "There's the year we got involved in four sites at a time," Jockish says with a wince. "A disaster. It just multiplied our costs. And the one year at Becton, we lost money."

Yet there's no complaint about that season. Becton rescued the event, which was on the verge of not being held because no other sites were made available.

All proceeds each year are donated to the Bergen County Coaches Association and its **Lou Lanzalotto** Scholarship fund, which awarded \$15,000 worth of scholarships last year. Wrestling does well, but doesn't rake in the bundles that basketball



RON FOX
HIGH SCHOOLS

tournaments do, Jockish notes. "One year, we cleared \$40."

And so the labor of love continues. This year, for the first time, the tournament will be conducted on a Saturday and Sunday, leaving Jockish an opportunity to spend more time than usual with his family on the holidays.

And then it will be back to work. The committee rarely receives congratulations for a job well done, even though it is deserved. But thankfully, the event is handled so well very few complaints are heard.

Jockish's thanks go to Paramus High for hosting it, and Fair Lawn and

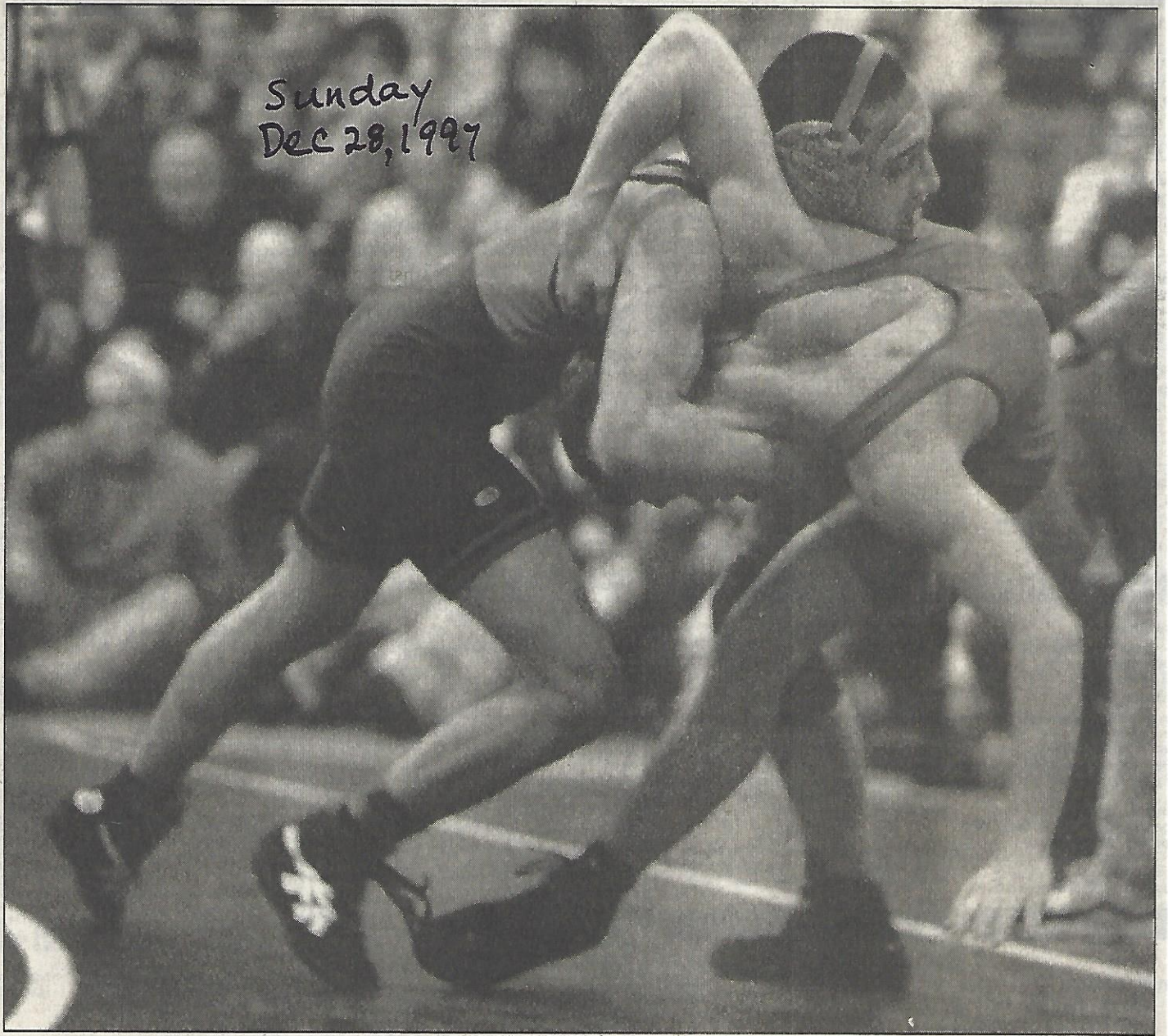
Bergen Tech making mats available on loan. It is an event that thrives on dedication and team effort. And it is one not to be missed.

Tenafly's **Mo Osman** went from All-Bergen soccer player to wrestling novice to tournament champion in two weeks. He went about his business in delightful fashion. Osman was as tickled by his success as the crowd that watched during the Cutter Classic in Fair Lawn. He enjoyed it all in good humor, ingenuously waving to his friends from the mat and from the medal-awards stand whenever a cheer greeted the announcement of his first name. Osman said he preferred going by one name, 'Mo.'

"**Pele** went by one name," he said with a laugh. "Nobody knows his last name."

The worst part of wrestling? "The match lasts six minutes," the senior 152-pounder said with a roll of the eyes.

Sunday
Dec 28, 1997



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Cliffside Park's Oliver Ruiz driving Fair Lawn's Andrew Bergmann to the edge of the mat en route to the 119-pound crown.

Sunday Dec 28, 1997

BERGEN HOLIDAY WRESTLING

Brizzi, Norgaard earn repeats

By **RON FOX**

Staff Writer

PARAMUS — Two returning champions repeated after being pushed by two other returning champs Sunday to highlight the final round of the 48-team Bergen County Coaches Holiday wrestling tournament.

Ramsey's Chris Brizzi took the title at 125 pounds, 5-3, with three takedowns of Bergen Catholic's Nick Fokas, and Erik Norgaard of St. Joseph Regional pulled out a 5-3 win at 135 pounds with a hip throw takedown and two back points with 36 seconds left to thwart Jesse Moreng of Northern Highlands.

Brizzi's memory was good enough to warn him he might have his hands full with Fokas, the 119-pound champion last year.

"Last time we wrestled, he beat me," said Brizzi, voted Most Outstanding Wrestler. "It was at a camp or somewhere two years ago, but I knew he was tough. And I worked hard all year to be ready."

Norgaard's win added to St. Joseph's luster as the Green Knights broke Bergen Catholic's five-year hold on the team title. SJR was the overall winner and Group 3 champion, Bergen Catholic won in Group 4, Pascack Hills in Group 2, and Ridgfield in Group 1.

Other champions were Passaic Valley's David Germakian, St. Joseph freshman Mike Palo, Cliffside Park's Oliver Ruiz, Hackensack freshman Chris Bitetto, Pascack Hills's Justin Frohlich, Northern Highlands' Paul

Pellegrino, Ramsey's Phil DeBiasi, Fort Lee's Brad Christie, Paramus's Mike Bassett, Rutherford's Henry Marquez, St. Joseph's Vince Ciurciu, and River Dell's Bob Balsamo.

Germakian won at 103 pounds, 3-0, over Chris McDonnell of Indian Hills with a single-leg takedown in the first and a spin and face escape in the second. Palo handled returning champion Mark Sassaman of Bergen Catholic at 112 by a 12-3 score through a series of takedowns that included a driving surge into Sassaman's side that sent them both flying.

Ruiz stopped Fair Lawn ace Andrew Bergmann, 12-6, beginning with a full lift and ending with a Peterson roll for back points. Bitetto edged Northern Valley at Demarest's John Lauterback, 8-5, with a sit-out and switch that led to three back points in the second period.

Moreng led Norgaard, the 125 champ last year, by catching him at midspin for a takedown and sliding out of a half-nelson for an escape and 3-0 lead.

"I had a pulled muscle in my back," Norgaard said of his injury timeout. "And he was tough. I couldn't get to his feet, but then I tried the duck-under and underhooked. He kept his balance at first, but then I stepped between his feet and got it."

Frohlich wrapped an elbow for three back points early against Hackensack's Aashon Larkins. Pellegrini surprised top-seeded Mark Galorenzo of BC, 7-3, beginning with a lift takedown. DeBiasi

built a 5-1 lead and beat BC's Kevin Collier, 5-4, thanks to a pair of double-leg dumps in the first period.

Christie's reversal and bear-hug takedown, both in the second period, led to his 4-2 win over Ray Meyer of Hasbrouck Heights. Bassett had his hands

full with Demarest's Joe Mormile, but his early underhook throw, a spectacular move, set the stage for an 8-5 win.

Marquez used another underhook throw for his 5:56 pin of Joe Cutruzulo of St. Joseph. Ciurciu made his throw from his knees, tossing Matt Greenberg

of Northern Highlands and pinning in 47 seconds. Balsamo ended the evening by winning, 14-6, over John Currid of Pascack Hills, opening with a double-leg takedown.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

12-28-97 TEAM SCORES

St. Joseph 226, Bergen Catholic 163, Pascack Hills 157, Northern Highlands 138, Hackensack 104, Northern Valley at Demarest 89, Paramus 83, Ramsey 77.5, Ridgfield Park 76.5, Garfield 74, River Dell 73, Cliffside Park 72, Indian Hills 64, (tie) Northern Valley at Old Tappan 59 and Pascack Valley 59, Fort Lee 58, Rutherford 55, Emerson/Park Ridge 54, Don Bosco Prep 52, (tie) Fair Lawn and Westwood 50, Lodi 45, Ridgfield 42, Cresskill 41, Leonia 37, Hasbrouck Heights 35, Saddle Brook 33, (tie) Elmwood Park and Palisades Park 32, North Bergen 29, Dumont 28, (tie) Bergenfield and Glen Rock 26, Lyndhurst 25, Mahwah 20, Tenafly

19, Ridgewood 14, Midland Park 13, Waldwick 12, Bogota 9, (tie) Bergen Tech and Ramapo 8, St. Mary's 6, (tie) Dwight-Englewood and New Milford 4, Teaneck 3.5, (tie) Becton and Paramus Catholic 0.

Group 1 — Ridgfield, Cresskill, Hasbrouck Heights
Group 2 — Pascack Hills, Ramsey, Ridgfield Park
Group 3 — St. Joseph, Northern Highlands, NV/Demarest

Group 4 — Bergen Catholic, Hackensack, Paramus

Pin trophy — Nick Fokas, Bergen Catholic, five falls in 9:34.

Outstanding wrestler — Chris Brizzi, Ramsey

Tues Jan 6, 1998

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Champ started young

By **RON FOX**

Staff Writer

Chris Brizzi was funneled toward a wrestling career the day his family moved from Wood-Ridge to Ramsey when he was a third-grader.

"My uncle [Charlie Angelillo] was a coach in Ramsey and he told my parents to sign me up for it, to let me try it out," says Brizzi, a Ramsey High School junior who won a repeat Bergen County championship and the Most Outstanding Wrestler award of the Bergen Coaches Holiday tournament. "He taught me moves in my basement."

Even a 1984 State high school champion, Tony Van Horn of Pascack Hills, had an indirect impact on Brizzi's direction. "His mom worked with my dad and they gave me a piece of their [wrestling] mat for our basement."

Some of that championship quality may have rubbed off on The Record's Bergen Athlete of the Week. Brizzi finished second in the Junior States in his second year of wrestling.

As a high school sophomore last year, he won

Bergen County, district, and regional championships, placed at the fifth-sixth level in the state, and finished second among 110 wrestlers in his weight class in the prestigious Cadet Nationals tournament for freestyle wrestling in North Dakota last summer.

Yet in between, Brizzi's career wasn't to his liking.

"After I finished second in the Junior States, I finished third, then fourth and fifth, and then didn't place. I lost the first two matches of the States in seventh grade, and I realized I had to get more into wrestling."

So in eighth grade, Brizzi gave up his other sports, football (running back) and baseball (first base/center field) — he also had starred on soccer traveling teams — and joined the Kenilworth wrestling school run by super instructor Ernie Monaco. It strikes people who know him now when Brizzi reveals he once wasn't totally a focused athlete.

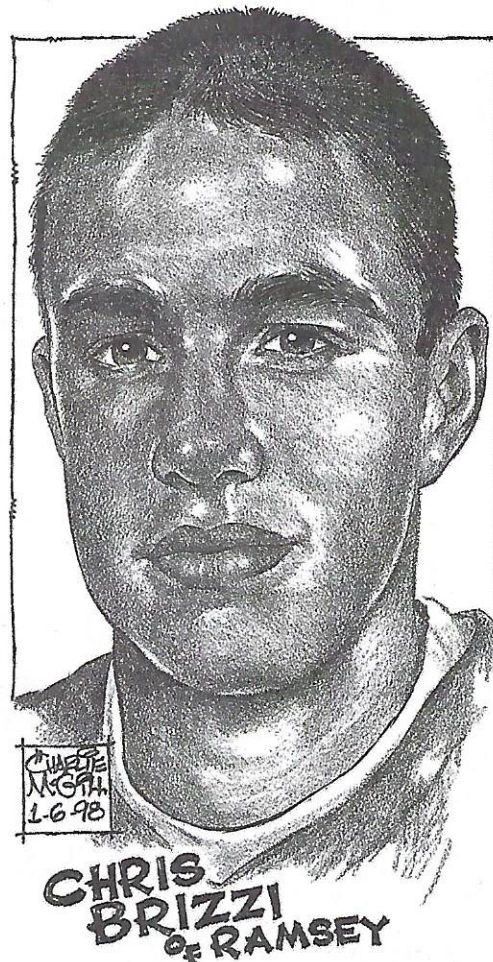
"He doesn't ever need to be told what has to be done; he's a totally focused kid," says Ramsey coach Rick Babitts, a two-time Bergen County champion for Fair Lawn. "What separates him is he loves wrestling, and takes on the best competition. He never shows any nervousness, and he likes that his parents don't push him but really support what he does."

Parents Lou and Becky are always there for him. Particularly noticeable is his mother, a jumble of nerves issuing a torrent of cheers for him from the stands. Dad coached him in football on the recreation level. And there's also his devoted older brother, Rob, the 1995 Bergen County 130-pound champion.

Rob is studying marketing at Miami (Ohio), but no longer wrestling. Yet it hardly seems that he is away because he is a homebody who cares for his kid brother, particularly during the most crucial points of a season.

"He was here for the Lakeland tournament and the County," Chris says.

Runners-up for Athlete of the Week are **Mike Bassett** of Paramus and **Chris Bitetto** of Hackensack in wrestling; and **Lindsay Davis** of River Dell, **Rachel Crasdi** of St. Mary's, and **Ken Junta** of Midland Park in basketball.



SPORT: WRESTLING

WEIGHT CLASS: 125-pounds **CLASS:** Junior **AGE:** 16

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT

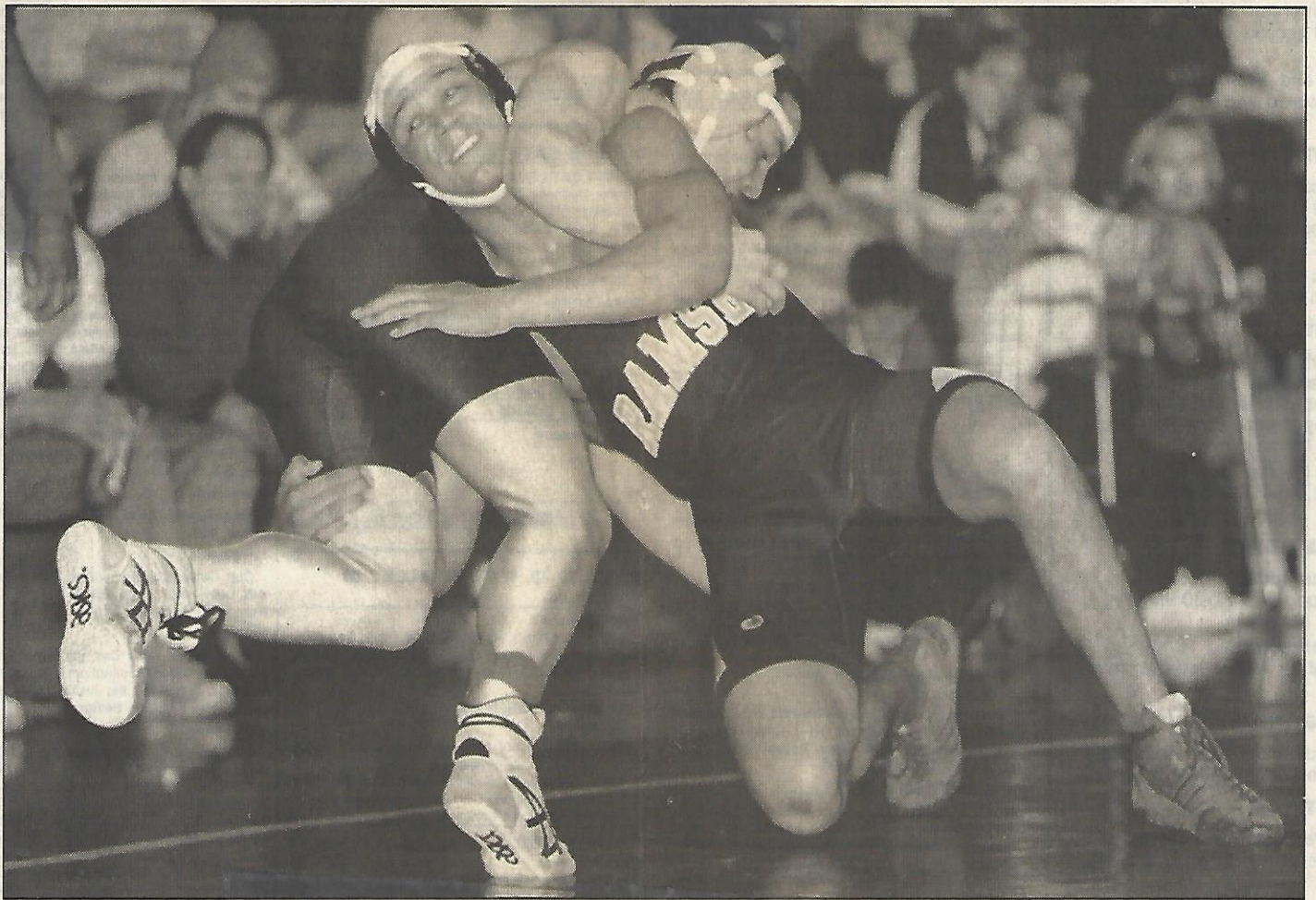
Brizzi won his second straight Bergen County Coaches Holiday wrestling tournament championship by defeating another returning champ, Nick Fokas of Bergen Catholic, 5-3. He also ran his record to 8-0 and was voted Most Outstanding Wrestler of the 48-team tournament.

BACKGROUND

He has wrestled since third grade, but played other sports before deciding in eighth grade to focus year-round on wrestling. He won County, district, and regional titles as a sophomore and finished at the fifth-sixth level in the state. In the summer, Brizzi was second in the Junior Nationals in North Dakota.

QUOTE

"I guess you could say I'm dedicated. I like to work hard, lifting and running. It's fun to train."



ED HILL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mark Christian of Ramsey attempting to turn for points in his 171 bout with Dustin Cook of Northern Valley at Old Tappan.

Sat
12/22/1997



ED HILL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Kyle Lezzette of Dumont battling to rise against the tight ride of Bergenfield's Bob Corressio in their 125-pound bout in the Bergen Holiday tournament.