

Clash of Champions set

• OVAC wrestlers lead all-star series 13-5; Resumes tonight

By BRIAN COOK
Times Leader Sports Writer

After a grueling state tournament in Ohio and West Virginia, a 14-man delegation of local wrestlers will get one more chance to showcase their talents on mat at the annual Clash of Champions.

The annual post season high school wrestling meet will showcase all-stars from Pennsylvania's Midwestern Athletic Conference MAC against all-stars from the OVAC which is on tap at tonight Hopewell High School in Aliquippa, Pa.

"It's an honor to be able to coach these kids, especially my three seniors, who have accomplished a lot in their career," OVAC and Harrison Central coach Todd Dunlap said. "This is a solid group of kids who have proved themselves at the state and conference levels."

The OVAC currently leads the series 13-5, but the dual can go either way with the high caliber of wrestlers and different style coming from the Keystone State.

"It's a weird transition for many of us," Dunlap shared. "Pennsylvania is a lot more on the mat and officials let people ride more."

The OVAC squad is chosen based on the placement of the seniors during the 2009 Ron Mauck OVAC tournament.

"We look at the highest placing senior at each weight class and go from there," OVAC-MAC Director Gene Monteleone explained. "We keep in touch with them throughout the end of the season and make sure they still want to wrestle in this event."

WRESTLING ALL-STARS

Who: OVAC vs. MAC

When:

Tonight, 7.

Where:

Hopewell

H.S.

Tickets:

Available at the door or at the school.



Clash of Champions Lineups

103: Jeremy Hall (Center) vs. Eric Beck (John Marshall)
112: Cody Morrison (Montour) vs. Zach Porter (Bellaire)
119: Dave Bauer (Montour) vs. Dirk Bauer (Wheeling Park)
125: Ben Fratangelo (Center) vs. Nick Risdon (Harrison Central)
130: Nick Spencer (Avella) vs. Erik Canter (Bellaire)
135: Nathan Gohn (Ambridge) vs. Taylor Banks (Harrison Central)
140: Joe Pickens Moon vs. Michael Slaga (Buckeye Local)
145: Brett Torres (Freedom) vs. Robbie Chilson (Bellaire)
152: Drew Howard (Hopewell) vs. Rob Eddy (Harrison Central)
160: Kacey Cozzens (Moon) vs. Johnny Merryman (Shadyside)
171: Derhan Towler (Hopewell) vs. Danny Doyle (Wheeling Park)
189: Jake Leninsky (W. Allegheny) vs. Tucker Goodwin (Park)
215: Bryan Cook (Hopewell) vs. Tom Schenkel (Caldwell)
285: Adam Wakefield (Freedom) vs. Sean West (Bridgeport)

Our ultimate goal is to have the best squad available out on the mat."

Another highlight of the event is it gives each wrestler one last high school match.

"It would be great to have them all end their career with a win," assistant OVAC and Caldwell coach Dustin Robison admitted. "Some of them may not have done that in their last match and this gives them a chance to go out on a winning note."

Leading the OVAC squad into battle will be John Marshall's Eric Beck (103), Bellaire's Zach Porter (112), Wheeling Park's

Dirk Bauer (119), Harrison Central's Nick Risdon (125), Bellaire's Erik Canter (130), Harrison Central's Taylor Banks (135), Buckeye Local's Mike Slaga (140), Bellaire's Robbie Chilson (145), Harrison Central's Rob Eddy (152), Shadyside's Johnny Merryman (160), Wheeling Park's Danny Doyle (171), Wheeling Park's Tucker Goodwin (189), Caldwell's Tom Schenkel (215) and Bridgeport's Sean West (285).

Wrestling will begin at 7 p.m.

The OVAC coaching squad will be made up of Dunlap, Cameron's Ron Trowbridge, Robison and Wheeling Park's Sean Doyle. The MAC squad will be mentored by Hopewell coach Jason Martsof.

"I relish the opportunity to get to interact with these kids on a different level. You always prepare to beat them, but now we are on the same team which offers a different experience," Dunlap said.

NOTES

The OVAC squad slated to wrestle attained the following accolades during the 2008-2009 season:

- Eight of the 14 were state place winners in Ohio or West Virginia.

- Porter and Bauer are the only four-time OVAC place winners.

- Chilson and Canter have competed made it to the state finals in Ohio Division III.

- Bauer and Doyle are both former state finalists in West Virginia with Bauer winning three state titles.

- Half of the OVAC wrestlers selected have won an OVAC title at one time in their prep career.

- Bauer, Porter, Canter, Chilson and Merryman have all recorded 150 wins in their prep careers.

Cook can be reached at bcook@timesleaderonline.com

OVAC Wrestlers Dismantle MAC

Whg. Park's Bauer earns MVP award

By BRIAN COOK
For The Intelligencer
ALIQUIPPA, Pa. — Wrestlers across the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference flexed their muscles Tuesday evening at Hopewell Junior High School, the site of Clash of Champions OVAC-MAC All-Star Wrestling Classic. Forced to keep their mat repertoire sharp for one more match, the OVAC claimed 10 of 14 matches to hammer the MAC 51-16.

"The OVAC showed we are right there with any other conference around. It ended up 51-16, but we had them blanked for a while and only lost four matches all night. I cannot complain about any of the kids," OVAC and Harrison Central coach Todd Dunlap said.

Dressed in a red singlet with an OVAC logo on the front, Buckeye Local's Mike Slaga (140) put the

mammoth two-state conference on the leader board pinning Avella's Mitch Spencer, who was a two-time state placer in the Keystone State. Teammate Robbie Chilson (145) of Bellaire continued with the officials slapping the mat to signify a pin.

Harrison's Rob Eddy (152) added to the lead handing Hopewell's Drew Howard a 4-3 setback before Johnny Merryman (160) of Shadyside turned a losing match around to pin Kyle Appleby.

Park's Danny Doyle (171) prevailed against Hopewell's Mark Short, 4-3 in OT.

Opening the floor for one of the most colorful OVAC wrestlers in recent history, Wheeling Park's Dirk Bauer then took center stage. Already a three-time Mountain State Champion, Bauer added another accolade to his already prestigious resume as the OVAC's Mon the way to pinning Dave Baker in 45 seconds.

Prep Wrestling

OVAC 51, MAC 16

140 - Mike Slaga (Buckeye Local) pinned Mitch Spencer (Avella), 5:41; 145 - Robbie Chilson (Bellaire) pinned Brett Torres (Freedom), 3:07; 152 - Rob Eddy (Harrison Central) dec. Drew Howard (Hopewell), 4-3; 160 - Johnny Merryman (Shadyside) pinned Kyle Appleby (Avella), 5:56; 171 - Danny Doyle (Wheeling Park) dec. Mark Short (Hopewell), 4-3 OT; 189 - Petros Georgilas (Montour) dec. Tucker Goodwin (Wheeling Park), 5-2; 215 - Jake Leninsky (West Allegheny) dec. Tom Schenkel (Caldwell), 7-4; 285 - Sean West (Bridgeport) dec. Adam Wakefield (Freedom), 4-1; 103 - Jeremy Hall (Center) major dec. Eric Beck (John Marshall), 15-3; 112 - Zach Porter (Bellaire) won by inj. Default over Mike Gardner (Montour); 119 - Dirk Bauer (Wheeling Park) pinned Dave Baker (Montour), 0:45; 125 - Nick Risdon (Harrison Central) pinned Ben Fratangelo (Center), 5:41; 130 - Mitch Spencer (Avella) pinned Erik Canter (Bellaire), 2:44; 135 - Taylor Banks (Harrison Central) pinned Nathan Gohn (Ambridge), 3:12.

OVAC-MAC ALL STARS



BECK

Eric Beck gleams in Brown and Gold for a stellar John Marshall mat program. The Monarchs' senior finished his prep career with 97 wins while claiming fifth at the Ron Mauck OVAC Tournament and sixth at the West Virginia State Tournament this season.

103 Pounds, John Marshall

★★★★★



PORTER

Zach Porter rounded out his career with hardware from the Ohio State Wrestling Tournament. The Big Reds grappler took fifth place while earning his 150th career win. He is also only the second Bellaire grappler to become a four-time OVAC place winner.

112 Pounds, Bellaire

★★★★★



BAUER

Dirk Bauer claimed his third consecutive Mountain State title this season as he finished his career with a 161-22 record. Claiming titles at both Park and Central, Bauer was a three-time OVAC champion and this year's Bierkorette Award recipient.

119 Pounds, Wheeling Park

★★★★★



RISDON

Nick Risdon claimed his first OVAC title in 5-3 overtime bout this season. A three-time OVAC placer, the Huskies' senior finished his career with a 134-47 ledger and was a three-time state qualifier. He also placed seventh in the state (2008) as a junior.

125 Pounds, Harrison Central

★★★★★



CANTER

Erik Canter had the most impressive run of the Bellaire mat program as the senior took second at the Ohio Division III state tournament last week. A member of the 150 win club at Bellaire, he was also an OVAC champion (2008) and runner-up (2009).

130 Pounds, Bellaire

★★★★★



BANKS

Taylor Banks is one of the best of the Huskies' grapplers on his feet leading the team in takedowns for three of his four seasons. Finishing his career with a 90-69 record, Banks placed three times in the mammoth OVAC tournament and was a three-time district qualifier.

135 Pounds, Harrison Central

★★★★★



SLAGA

Mike Slaga will be a huge loss to the Buckeye Local mat program. Leading the team in takedowns and nearfall points, Slaga was an OVAC runner-up (2009) and a three-time district qualifier. He rounded out his career with a seventh place finish at the state tourney.

140 Pounds, Buckeye Local

★★★★★



CHILSON

Robbie Chilson is one of the most talented wrestlers in Bellaire history. A three-time state place winner in Ohio, Chilson was an OVAC champion (2007) and a two-time runner (2008 and 2009). He finished his prep career with a record of 157-32.

145 Pounds, Bellaire

★★★★★



EDDY

Rob Eddy managed to claim an individual OVAC crown this season. Now a three-time placer in the mammoth conference tournament, Eddy was also a two-time Division II state qualifier. He rounded out his career with sixth place at the state and a 114-50 career record.

152 Pounds, Harrison Central

★★★★★



MERRYMAN

Johnny Merryman became the second ever two-time OVAC champion - 2008 and 2009 - in Shadyside history this season. The Tigers senior rounded out his career with a sixth place at the Division III state tournament and a career record of 154-33.

160 Pounds, Shadyside

★★★★★



DOYLE

Danny Doyle claimed his first ever OVAC title in a tight overtime tilt this season. A two-time OVAC place winner, Doyle managed to claim silver honors in the Mountain State tournament this season. He finished his career with a 123-45 record.

171 Pounds, Wheeling Park

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Bellaire's Zach
Porter (112),
Wheeling Park's
Dirk Bauer (119), Harrison Central's
Nick Risdon (125), Bellaire's Erik
Canter (130), Harrison Central's
Taylor Banks (135), Buckeye Local's
Mike Slaga (140), Bellaire's Robbie
Chilson (145), Harrison Central's
Rob Eddy (152), Shadyside's Johnny
Merryman (160), Wheeling Park's
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*Cook can be reached at
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RISDON
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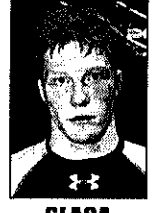
CANTER
130 Pounds, Bellaire
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Erik Canter had the most impres-
sive run of the Bellaire mat pro-
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BANKS
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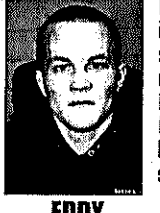
SLAGA
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CHILSON
145 Pounds, Bellaire
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Robbie Chilson is one of the most
talented wrestlers in Bellaire histo-
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EDDY
152 Pounds, Harrison Central
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MERRYMAN
160 Pounds, Shadyside
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Johnny Merryman became the
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DOYLE
171 Pounds, Wheeling Park
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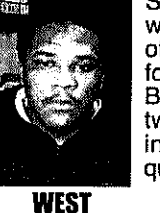
GOODWIN
189 Pounds, Wheeling Park
★★★★★

Tucker Goodwin catapulted up the
chart in the Patriots' varsity lineup
this season and claimed second at
the mammoth OVAC tournament.
The Park senior also managed to
be a two-time West Virginia state
qualifier. He finished his career
with a 99-57 record.



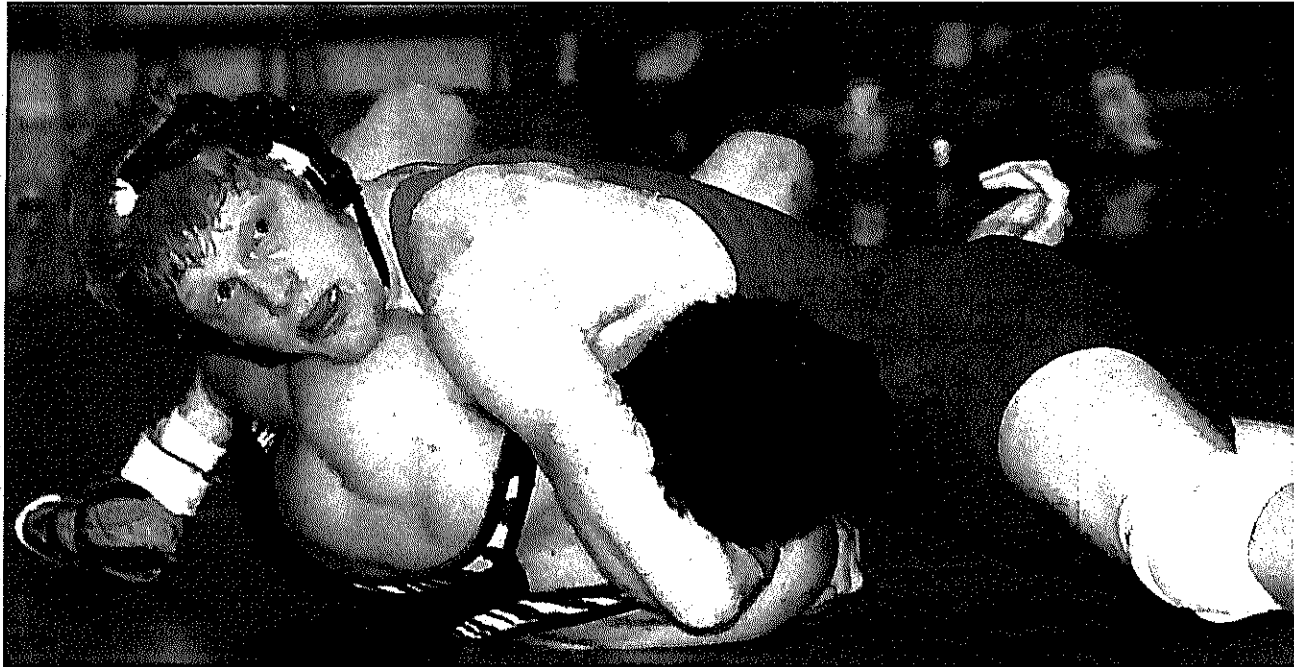
SCHENKEL
215 Pounds, Caldwell
★★★★★

Tom Schenkel made the most of
his senior season placing fourth in
the OVAC and qualifying for the
Ohio Division III state tourney. The
Redskins' grappler rounded out his
wrestling career with a 94-53
record and was deemed an
Academic All-Ohioan.



WEST
285 Pounds, Bridgeport

Sean West finished his career one
win shy of 100 wins (career record
of 99-34), but had a stellar career
for the Bulldogs' mat program. The
Bridgeport heavyweight was a
two-time OVAC placer (runner-up
in 2009) and a two-time district
qualifier.



BUCKEYE LOCAL'S Mike Slaga tightens up a pinning combination against Avella's Mitch Smith in Tuesday night's OVAC-MAC Clash of Champions All-Star Wrestling Match in Allquippa, Pa. Slaga won the match in a time of 5:41. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

T-L Photo/Brian Cook

OVAC pins MAC foe

By **BRIAN COOK**
Times Leader Sports Writer

ALIQUIPPA, Pa. - Wrestlers across the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference flexed their muscles Tuesday evening at Hopewell Junior High School, the site of Clash of Champions OVAC-MAC All-Star Wrestling Classic. Forced to keep their mat repertoire sharp for one more match, the OVAC claimed 10-of-14 matches to hose the MAC 51-16

"The OVAC showed tonight we are right there with any other conference around. It ended up 51-16, but we had them blanked for a while and only lost four matches all night. I cannot complain about any of the kids," OVAC and Harrison Central coach Todd Dunlap said.

Dressed in red singlet with an OVAC logo on the front, Buckeye Local's Mike Slaga (140) got the mammoth two-state conference on the leader board pinning Avella's Mitch Spencer, who was a two-time state placer in the Keystone State. Teammate Robbie Chilson (145) of Bellaire continued with the officials slapping the mat to signify a pin against Freedom's Brett Torren. Chilson, a three-time state placer in Ohio, recorded the opening takedown and finished the match in 3:07.

"These OVAC guys are all at the level in their wrestling careers where they know what to do already," Dunlap shared. "Having the chance to coach kids of this caliber alone, not to mention on a team together, is special opportunity."

Harrison's Rob Eddy (152) continued to add to the conference's lead handing Hopewell's Drew Howard a 4-3 setback before teammate Johnny Merryman (160) of Shadyside turned a losing match around to pin Avella's Kyle Appleby.

"I expected a lot of kids of this

level. Slaga was down for a while, but caught his kid. Johnny (Merryman) held on until the end and got his kid. One thing I can say for the OVAC is we don't ever stop wrestling. We continue to go and go pushing the pace until we get into our position to be successful. Even when we are way down, like we were tonight at times, we battle back," Dunlap shared.

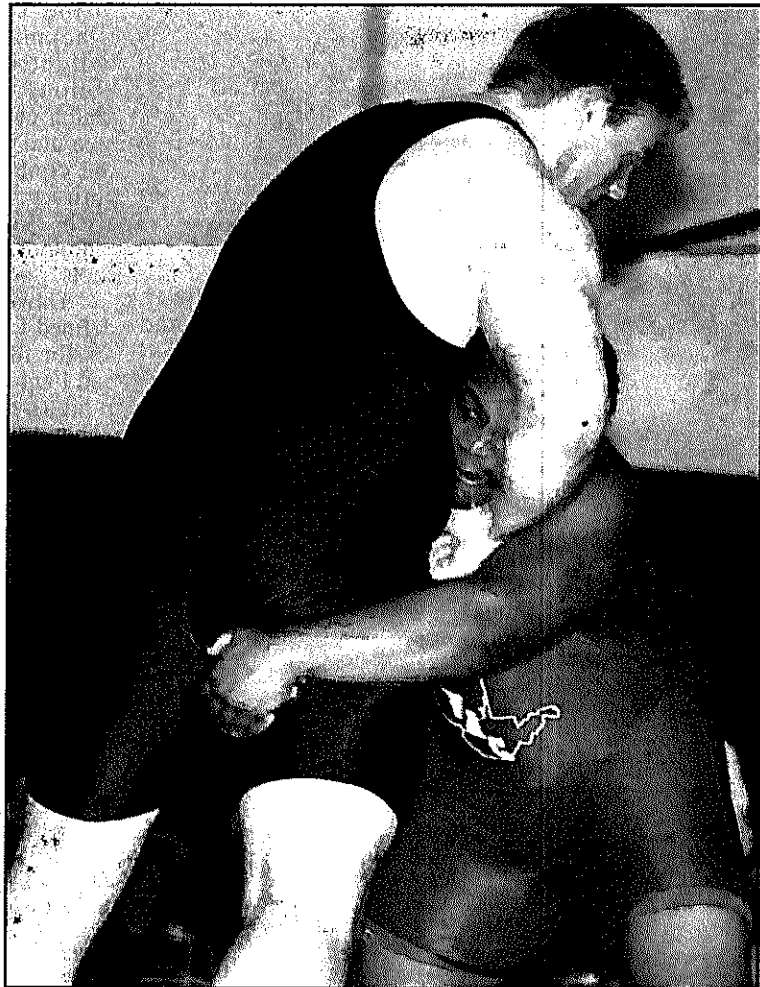
In the only overtime contest of the evening, Wheeling Park's Danny Doyle (171) prevailed over Hopewell's Mark Short in a tight 4-3 decision.

In a short falling, Mountour's Petros Georgilas and West Allegheny's Jake Leninsky managed to oust Wheeling Park's Tucker Goodwin (189) and Caldwell's Tom Shenkel (215), 5-2 and 7-4 respectively, to put the MAC on the board.

Still leading in the team scoring, Bridgeport's Sean West came across Goliath Adam Wakefield of Freedom. Marking the height chart at 6-ft-7 and every bit of the 285-pounds, West didn't let the size faze him. Light on his feet, the Bulldogs' senior worked to the outside and recorded a pair of takedowns in a 4-1 victory.

Suffering another OVAC loss in the featherweight class, John Marshall's Eric Beck could not get anything going for him as Center's Jeremy Hall defeated the Monarchs senior 15-3. Getting the OVAC back on track was Bellaire's Zach Porter. The recent Ohio state placer, physically took it to Montour's Mike Gardner as he attempted a half nelson. Working the fellow 112-pounds, Gardner decided to hold off on the shoulder pain and throw in the towel as Porter was awarded six team points.

Opening the floor for one of the most colorful OVAC wrestlers in recent history, Wheeling Park's Dirk Bauer then took center stage. Already an



T-L Photo/Brian Cook

BRIDGEPORT HEAVYWEIGHT Sean West, right, works in on the legs of Adam Wakefield of Freedom. The 6-ft-7 Wakefield definitely had the size advantage, but the fight in West was too much as the Bulldogs' senior earned a 4-1 decision

three-time Mountain State Champion, Bauer added another accolade to his already prestigious resume as the OVAC's MVP on the way to pinning Montour's Dave Baker in 45 seconds.

Harrison Central's Nick Risdon added to the OVAC lopsided tilt pinning Center's Ben Fratangeli in the third period.

Bellaire's Erik Canter, who recently took second in the 130-

pound Ohio Division III tournament, couldn't quite get back on track as he fell short to Spencer - who wrestled twice to give the MAC a full squad.

Taylor Banks (135) of Harrison added the whip cream topping to end the night as he stuck Ambridge's Nathan Gohn in 3:12.

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