

Photo by John McCabe
John Marshall High School junior Maitlyn Miller catches her breath following a set during practice this week in Moundsville as she and her team prepare for the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission Region 1 Swim Championships Saturday at Brooke High School.

That perception has been changing over the past few years, particularly with the emergence of current West Virginia University freshman swimmer Victoria Kidney who won two individual

swimmers this season and an increased level of competitiveness in the pool. In fact, it's safe to say that first-year head coach Timmi Snyder and her Monarch swimmers are where the top three finishers in each event receive an automatic birth to the state championships, Miller is seeded second in the 50 freestyle and first in the 100 freestyle.

any Householder and Lily Linscheid. Wheeling Park High School's Abby Heilman comes in at fifth in the Region 1 rankings.
Please see SWIM, Page 12

Third Time The Charm For 5A Duals Champion Steubenville Big Red

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer
MOUNDSVILLE

Steubenville was tired of finishing as the bridesmaid in the last two OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 5A Dual Meet Championships.

The third time was a charm as top-seeded Big Red ousted No. 4 and defending champion Wheeling Park, 42-30, in the semifinals before doubling up No. 3 John Marshall, 48-24, in the title tilt Thursday night inside the John Marshall Field House.

"This is nice to be bringing home the title," Steubenville head coach Lucas Huffman. "We came up a little short the last two years, but I'm really pleased with how the kids competed tonight."

John Marshall took a 6-0 lead when Caleb Yates (285) posted a pin in the first match. A forfeit win by Frank Guntrum (106) and pin by his sister, Talea (113), gave Big Red a 12-6 advantage, but the Monarchs came right back with a decision by Gabe Chaplin (120) and a pin by Zander Ward (126) for a 15-12 edge.

However, all season Steubenville's strength has been its middle-weight. Last night was no exception.

Behind pins by Charlie Abbott (132), Cal

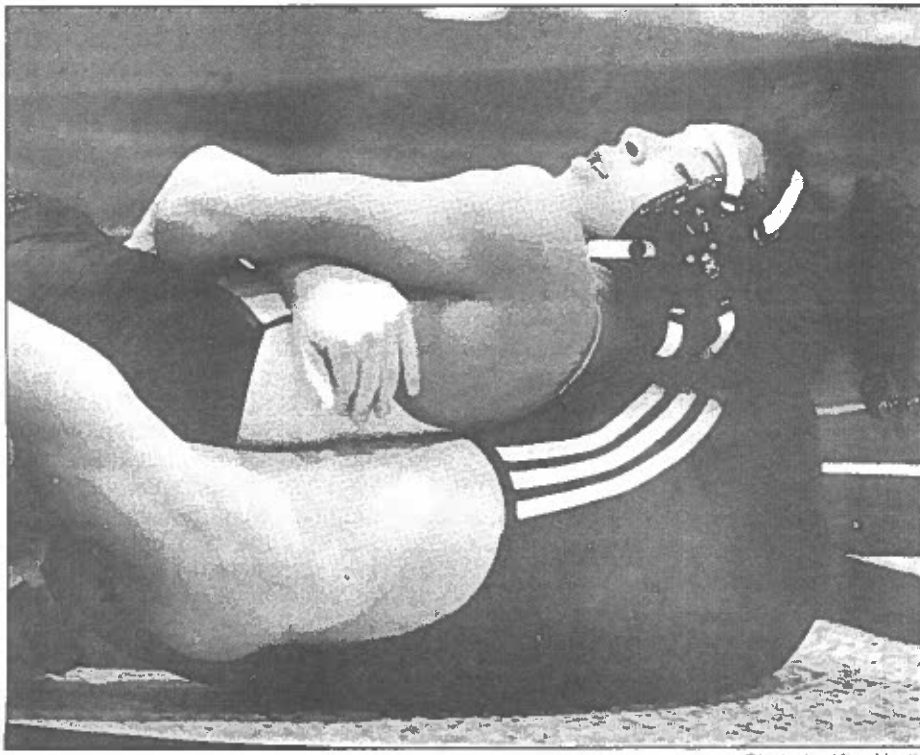


Photo by Kim North

Steubenville's Talea Guntrum earns back points against John Marshall's Hayden Bonar during their 113-pound match during Thursday night's OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 5A Dual Meet championship bout inside the John Marshall Field House in Moundsville. Guntrum won by pin and Big Red claimed the team title with a 48-24 win over the Monarchs

Beadling (138), Cooper Smith (144) and Brody Saccoccia (150) and a decision by Savier Faulks (157). Big Red ran away to a 39-15 margin and never looked back.

"We've got some horses through the middle of our lineup," Huffman noted. "But I think everyone contributed tonight. I'm proud of each and every one of them."

Brook Harrison (165)

and Maverick Lemasters (190) had late victories for John Marshall, as did Steubenville's Ladyn Babel (175).

"Hopefully, this is something we can build off of heading into Saturday's action," Huffman said.

Big Red returns to action Saturday at Indian Valley in the Ohio Division II Eastern District team duals against West

Holmes. The winner meets the winner of the New Philadelphia-Indian Valley dual for the title and a berth in the state tournament.

This is Steubenville's 10th championship since 2013, with some coming in Class 4A, according to the OVAC website.

Wheeling Park bounced back with a 42-39 win over Brooke for third place.

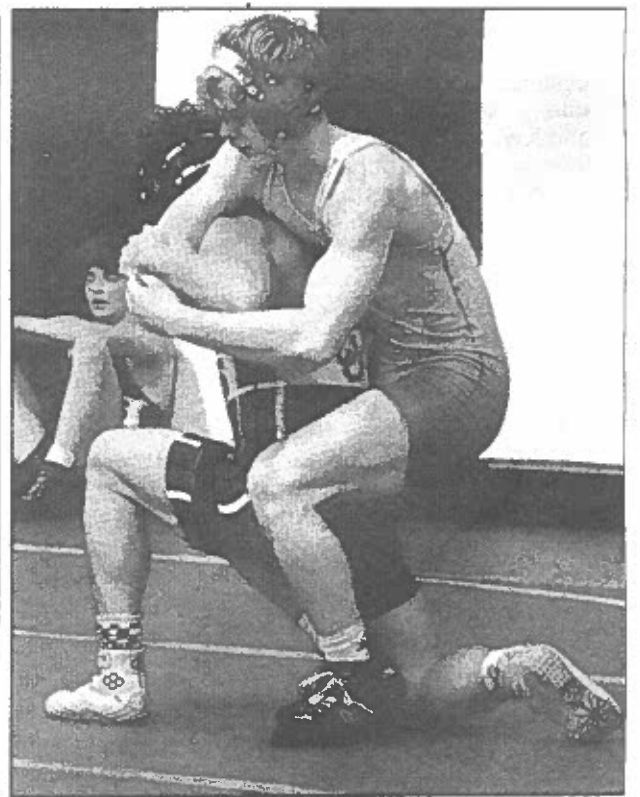


Photo by Kim North

Barnesville's Karson Milhoan looks to score against Martins Ferry's Kaden Archer during their 144-pound match Thursday night during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 3A Dual Meet Championship inside the John Marshall Field House in Moundsville. Milhoan posted a technical fall as the Shamrocks rolled, 71-3.

Barnesville Doesn't Miss A Beat In Dominating OVAC Duals Title Defense

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer
MOUNDSVILLE

Barnesville once again flexed its muscles during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 3A Dual Meet Championships Thursday night inside the John Marshall Field House.

The top seeds barely broke a sweat in rolling past No. 4 Magnolia, 72-4, before dismantling third-seeded Martins Ferry, 71-3, in the championship match.

Martins Ferry had outlasted No. 2 Linsly, 39-27, in a semifinal. The Cadets took third with a 48-33 victory over the Blue Eagles.

"I think a lot of people expected us to come in here and win big, but I'm not sure how many had us winning by these margins," Barnesville head coach Jayson Stephen said.

The title is the third straight for the Shamrocks and completes a double-double as they also won the Class 3A and Overall titles at the 70th annual OVAC Ron Mauck Tournament inside Wheeling's WesBanco Arena.

"This is nice for the kids. We bumped some kids around and got some kids in the lineup in order to get them some mat time," Stephen explained. "I thought everyone wrestled well."

During the two duals, Barnesville went an impressive 26-2, with many of the victories coming by pins.

In the finals against the Purple Riders, the Shamrocks recorded three straight pins for an 18-0 margin and never looked back in building the margin to 71-0 before dropping the final match at 215.

Blake Kirk (285) started the pinfest in 1:27 and Ben Ralston (106) and Johnathan Huntsman (113) followed in 2:36 and 34 seconds, respectively. A 7-3 decision by Ayden Andrews (120) bumped the count to 21-0 and Conner Wilson (126) made it 27-0 with a fall in 1:08. Brayden Trigg's 13-7 decision at 1:32 preceded a lightning-quick 13-second pin from Ohio State University recruit Dakota King (138).

Senior Karson Milhoan (144) posted a 16-0 technical fall and Johnathan Foster (150) was awarded a forfeit before defending Ohio Division III state champion and Cleveland State signee Reese Stephen (157) pinned his opponent in 1:13. The King brothers - Skyler (165) and Ayden (175) - recorded pins in 1:25 and 42 ticks, respectively. Hines Ford (190) ended the onslaught with a 26-second fall.

Martins Ferry avoided a shutout when Tayson Palmer (215) earned a 10-4 decision.

Barnesville is back in action Saturday at home in a Division III Eastern District Regional Dual Meet Tournament. One semifinal has Marion Elgin and Malvern squaring off, while the Shamrocks await the winner of Caldwell and Tuscarawas Valley. The winner advances to state competition.

"The kids are happy with this team title, but they have bigger goals in mind and are working hard everyday to accomplish them," Coach Stephen said.

Barnesville is the top-ranked Division III team in the Buckeye State.

Union Local Jets Push Past Bellaire In Conference 3A Consolation Finals

By NICK HENTHORN
Sports Editor
BELLAIRE

In their third meeting of the season, there wasn't much the Bellaire Big Reds or Union Local Jets could do to surprise each other.

Points were hard to come by in a battle between two familiar teams, the Jets pushing forward to an eventual 41-31 victory on the road.

Playing in an OVAC 3A consolation finals, Lauren Miller scored 20 points to lead Union Local, though it was the Jets' defense which stole the show Thursday.

"We think they're a pretty good team," Union Local head coach Scooter Tolzda said of Bellaire. "They've got some really good offensive players. We told our girls after we got beat Monday, that it was going to be a battle of the wills, who wanted to win the game the most."

"I'll give our defense credit, we really take pride in our defense. I don't think it was a great offensive game. [Bellaire] had a lot to do with that. We hung in

there and our defense came through for us today."

Union Local fell to conference 3A No. 1 seed Martins Ferry in the OVAC semifinals, while Bellaire were bested by Fort Frye. The Cadets and Purple Riders play for the conference title on Saturday.

Zara Harveth scored 15 to lead Bellaire - scoring all seven of Bellaire's points in the first quarter, the Jets taking an 11-7 lead going into the second quarter.

Eliana Mason scored 10 points to follow Harveth, and likewise scored all of Bellaire's points in the second quarter, the home team trailing 18-11 at halftime.

With both teams stuck in the mud throughout the first half, it was a scoring burst from Miller to start the second half which made the difference Thursday.

Miller made a 3-pointer on the first possession of the third quarter to put Union Local up 10. Then the senior canned another, then another, and by quarter's end Miller had scored

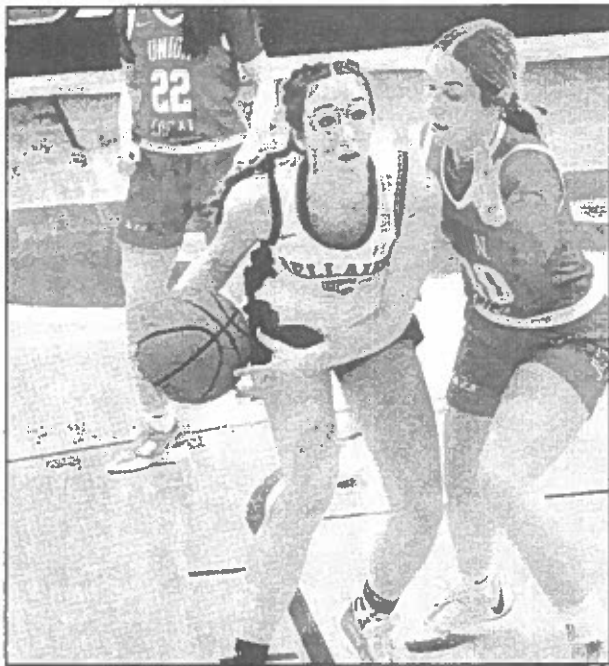


Photo by Nick Henthorn

Bellaire's Zara Harveth fights for space under the basket against the Union Local Jets inside "The House of Champions" on Thursday. Harveth scored 15 points for the Big Reds.

13 points in the third, and Union Local led 33-22.

"Union Local's a good team, they're a very well-coached team so you know you're always going to get a good effort," Bellaire head coach John Farrier said. "They play to their strengths - I don't know

how many Miller had, but she had a lot. She's a really nice player, she's worked really hard to get where she's at, and she's come a long way from her freshman year. I'll be glad to see her gone next year."

Please see JETS, Page 12

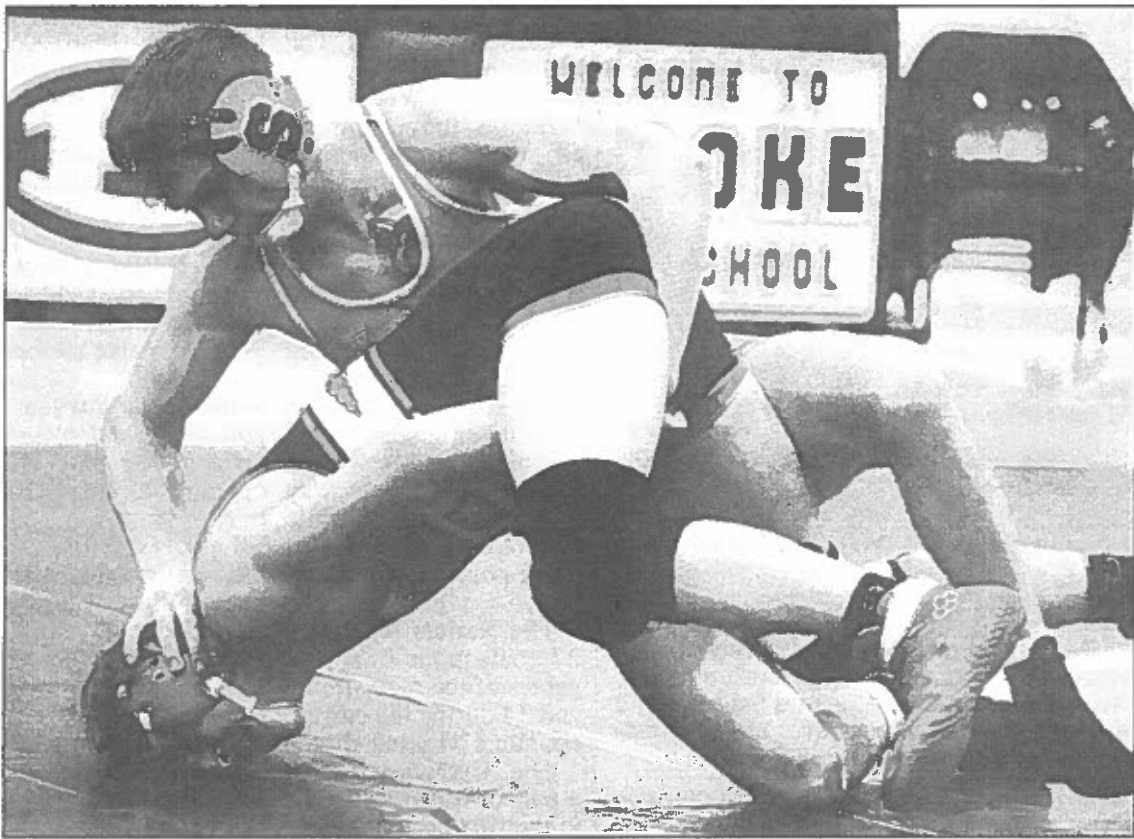


Photo by Kim North

Shadyside's Andrew Osman pushes his Caldwell opponent's face into the mat during their 150-pound match Wednesday night during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 1A/2A Dual Meet championships inside the Wellness Center at Brooke High School. Osman won by major decision as the Tigers defended their team title.

Tigers Stay On Top In Conference Duals

Shadyside Comes From Behind To Defend 1A/2A Title

By **KIM NORTH**
Staff Writer

WELLSBURG - Shadyside defended its OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 1A/2A Dual Meet wrestling championship Wednesday night. However, it took two matches and a strong rally to do so as the 10th annual event was held inside the Wellness Center at Brooke High School.

In 2023, only two teams - the Tigers and Bridgeport - qualified for the Final Four. Shadyside came out on top via criteria after the dual was deadlocked at the end of eight matches which were evenly split.

Head coach Chase Kinemond's third-ranked squad trailed top-ranked Caldwell, 21-6, five matches remaining in the second of two duals.

The Tigers recorded four con-

secutive pins, the last by Chris Stillion at 215 pounds, to stun the Redskins, 30-27.

"This one feels better, definitely. It was a little bit different," Kinemond said of the path his Tigers took. "This was a revenge win because we lost to them earlier this season."

Andrew Osman, competing after a serious knee injury his junior season, started the eruption at 144. Kaden McGuire (150) and Landon Simmons (157) followed suit to make it 24-21 in Shadyside's favor. Stillion's fall iced the cake.

"We bumped up some kids that we thought had chances to win and it worked out," Kinemond said of a couple matches.

Caldwell made it closer with a forfeit win at 285.

"Hopefully everything is going up from here," Kinemond noted. "Hopefully some of the

younger kids see what is going on and decide to come out.

"We had six kids last year when we won and we had eight this year," he added. "We want to keep building from here. I couldn't be any prouder of a group of kids for stepping up like they did tonight."

In its first match of the triangular, Shadyside defeated No. 2 Steubenville Catholic, 40-28, as the Tigers led 18-0 before the Crusaders fought back to 18-16.

A forfeit win at 144 and a major decision by Osman at 150 bumped the count to 28-16. Each team picked up six points on forfeits for a 34-22 count before Stillion sealed it with a pin.

Caldwell defeated Steubenville Catholic, 48-12, for second.

New sports podcast available

■ Check out our new podcast, the Ohio Valley Sports Report, at <https://www.theintelligencer.net>.

Oak Glen Pulls Off Repeat In Dominant 4A Duals Showing

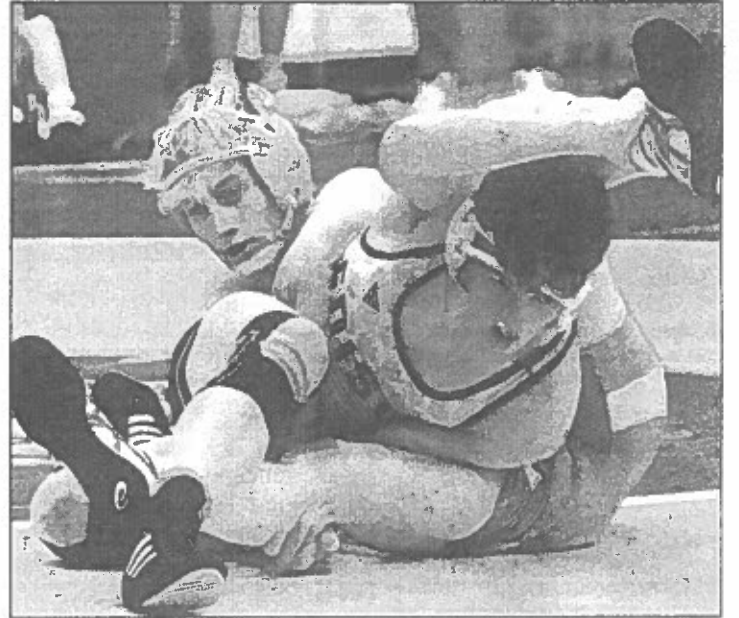


Photo by Kim North

Edison's Caiden Cooley has control of Oak Glen's Hayden Lamb during their 138-pound match Wednesday night during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 4A Dual Meet championships inside the Wellness Center at Brooke High School. Cooley won by medical default when Lamb couldn't stop a cut from bleeding.

Golden Bears Top Edison In Finals

By **KIM NORTH**
Staff Writer

WELLSBURG - Oak Glen is nearly perfect in OVAC wrestling events under second-year head coach Josh Cornell. The Golden Bears tied for the Ron Mauck Tournament Class 4A championship in his first season before winning it all by themselves this year.

Wednesday night Oak Glen defended its Bill Hinegardner Class 4A Dual Meet Championship with victories over Hancock County rival and third seed Weir, 63-9, and No. 4 Edison, 49-27, inside the Wellness Center at Brooke High School.

"Not to take anything away from the other teams, but we expected to come in here and

win this," Cornell allowed. "We wrestled our matches and did what we had to to come out on top."

In its Hancock County semifinal bout with the Red Riders, the No. 2 Golden Bears bolted to a 33-0 lead and won all but two of the 14 matches. In the final, they ran out to an 18-3 lead on pins by Nathan Pasco (106) Cole Raines (120) and Logan Davis (126).

The Wildcats countered with back-to-back wins by Evan Yohman (132) and Caiden Cooley (138) before Logan Graham (144) got Oak Glen by on the winning side of the ledger with a fall that gave the Golden Bears a 24-15 advantage.

Please see REPEAT. Page 10

OVAC Boys Basketball Pairings Are Announced

By **KIM NORTH**
Staff Writer

WHEELING - It became official Tuesday morning, Linsly will not be participating in the OVAC Boys Basketball Championships.

Although the Cadets (16-0) sit atop the Class 3A standings, they broke a West Virginia Secondary Schools Athletic Commission rule by playing a recent game on a Sunday, thus forcing the OVAC to step in.

By virtue of the ruling, Union Local (12-4) grabs the top seed in Class 3A with an average of 49.125, which

edged out Martins Ferry (9-3) which had 45.385. The Jets will host No. 4 Buckeye Trail (12-2, 42.000) next Tuesday while the Purple Riders get No. 3 Wheeling Central (12-4, 44.875).

In Class 5A, Morgantown (14-1, 68.800) grabbed the No. 1 spot and will entertain No. 4 Steubenville (7-8, 32.800) in one semifinal. The other has No. 2 Wheeling Park (55.143) hosting No. 3 Brooke (8-7, 38.267). Marietta finished second but is not



participating, nor are No. 4 Warren Local and No. 5 Dover.

The Class 4A field is topped by Harrison Central (14-2, 60.250), with East Liverpool (13-3, 57.625) checking in at No. 2. The Huskies will entertain No. 4 Beaver Local (8-10, 30.000) while the Potters host No. 3 St. Clairsville (12-4, 52.875).

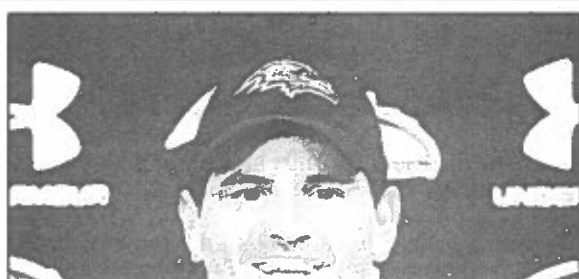
Undefeated Monroe Central (15-0, 60.000) heads up the Class 2A foursome. The Seminoles will welcome No. 4 River (8-

6, 34.000) in one semifinal. The other has No. 3 Steubenville Central (12-6, 39.778) facing No. 2 Toronto (13-4, 44.471) in the Gem City. Shadyside (10-8, 33.000) finished a close fifth.

In Class 1A, Cameron (11-3, 33.286) earned the top seed and will host No. 4 Madonna Local (6-7, 21.692) in a semifinal. The other has No. 2 Trinity (9-5, 30.143) hosting No. 3 Wellsville (9-8, 25.529).

The winners will meet on Saturday, Feb. 10 at Harrison Central High School in Cadiz for the championships. Times will be announced.

Seahawks Hire Ravens Coordinator Mike Macdonald For Head Coaching Role



West Virginia Mountaineers Sink Bearcats As Edwards Returns To Starting Lineup

By **BOB HERTZEL**
WV News
MORGANTOWN -

Bob Edwards returned to the starting lineup with a tense, 69-65 victory over Cincinnati at the Coliseum, looking forward

here and a very good one at that."

The 35-year-old, who turns 36 at the end of February, was one of the best relievers during his prime with Cincinnati and the New York Yankees. He evolved into more of an eighth-inning role over the last three seasons while pitching for the Yankees, Kansas City and the Texas Rangers.

Asked whether he still considers himself a closer, Chapman shrugged.

"When I started off my career, I wasn't a closer," he said. "I was a sixth, seventh, eighth-inning guy. A couple years with the Reds and I really got that opportunity to be a closer. Now, I just consider myself someone who can really adapt to what I need to do. I'm a pitcher who can adjust to whatever is needed from me."

Chapman is 50-40 with a 2.53 ERA and 321 saves spread across 14 seasons. The hard-throw-

ing left-hander has won a pair of World Series, first with the Chicago Cubs in 2016 and the Texas Rangers last fall. His average fastball velocity of 99.0 mph was his highest since 2017, an uptick he attributed to a commitment to training after a poor 2022 season with New York.

The signing came as a bit of a surprise by the Pirates, who annually have among the lowest payrolls. Chapman gives them a proven veteran in front of Bednar and — if Pittsburgh finds itself out of the mix by the trade deadline — a potentially inviting bargaining chip.

Chapman — who battled the Pirates for six years early in his career with Cincinnati — is optimistic Pittsburgh is ready to contend after posting a 15-win improvement from 2022 (61-100) to

2023 (76-86).

"It's a young team and they seem really thirsty to win and I'm an athlete who likes to compete," Chapman said. "So being here with a team who really wants to get in this division race and start winning was good for me."

Chapman and Bednar met briefly recently, which only made Chapman more anxious to report to Pirates City in Bradenton, Florida for the start of spring training in a couple of weeks.

He will also reunite with Pittsburgh star designated hitter Andrew McCutchen, a rival when they were on opposing teams a decade ago, including an incident where Chapman hit McCutchen with a 101 mph fastball, a circumstance that he said is "part of life in baseball."

Any hard feelings are

now long gone, with Chapman calling the Pirates icon "an excellent person, an excellent ball-player."

It's something Chapman believes he can now say about himself. He was suspended 30 games by Major League Baseball in 2016 for his role in an incident with his then-girlfriend the previous year, though no legal charges were filed.

Chapman said he's a "different person now" and a "better person" than I was. He also wants to use his story to make sure others don't make the same missteps.

"It's something that when I get a chance to work with younger players, it's something I share," he said. "So it's hopefully something they don't make the same mistakes and they can learn from that experience, which I have."

EDWARDS

(Continued from Page 9)

"Let's kind of flush the past and strive for growth every day and try to figure out how we maximize the potential of this team."

The difference between this team with Edwards playing 29 minutes and the past games was evident in every facet of the game, but none more important than the realization that this game saw them wipe out a 10-point deficit in the last 6 minutes of the game and go on to a four-point victory.

"Down the stretch we were down 10. I think it was the first time all year that we've had a double-digit deficit and had enough resolve, enough resilience, and enough poise to make that comeback and get a victory," Eilert said. "Credit to our guys for staying in it and staying positive and grinding one possession out at a time to get us the victory."

"We played good," said Kerr, who had 10 points, seven assists and three steals, many of those assists on pick and roll plays ending with a lob and dunk connection with Edwards. "I don't think we played outstanding but we played good enough to get a win. It was a gritty game and we gritted that one out, which I am very proud of."

All season long WVU had been dominated in the paint and Cincinnati is a big, strong, hard rebounding team, but in this game with Edwards back full time the Mountaineers outscored the Bearcats, 34-30, in the paint.

"I tried to instill some confidence in him," Eilert said, speaking after he missed some early free throws. "I told him we're not playing any different. We're going to play aggressive and play to win. If you end up at the line, we'll live."

"So, he had all the confidence in the world and from there on out, 25 and 10. It's a difference maker having Jesse on the floor," Eilert continued.

"I can't imagine with a rebounding team like that, not having Jesse. With the way he can rim run and the threat of a rim run early is going to open up everybody on the floor and should go to play inside out. Kind of the way I envisioned playing from the beginning."

And so, they are taking this game, this moment as a new start to try and make a point and impact in the Big 12, whether it be spoiler down the stretch or a factor in the Big 12 Championships.

Being reborn is a whole lot better than just accepting defeat.

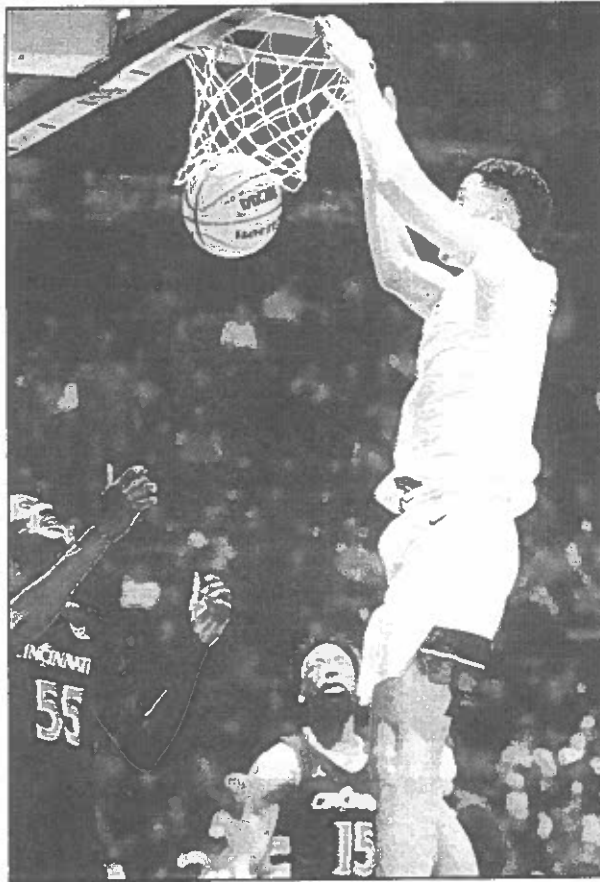


Photo Provided

West Virginia's Jesse Edwards slams a dunk against Cincinnati during the Mountaineers' away game vs. the Bearcats on Wednesday, Jan. 31. Edwards finished with 25 points, 10 rebounds and four blocks in his return from a wrist injury, and WVU won 69-65.

COACHING

(Continued from Page 9)

One of the unknowns will be how Macdonald meshes with an organization that was shaped around Carroll's philosophy for more than a decade. Seattle general manager John Schneider said one of the mandates from owner/chair Jody Allen was to keep a level of Carroll's culture in place. How Macdonald manages that will be one of the questions.

Macdonald, a Georgia graduate who began his coaching career there from 2011-13, broke into the NFL with the Ravens as a coaching intern in 2014. He moved up to defensive assistant, defensive backs coach and linebackers coach through 2020 before going to Michigan to run

Jim Harbaugh's defense. After returning to Baltimore, Macdonald had one of the top scoring defenses in the league over the past two seasons. This past season, the Ravens ranked sixth in total defense playing an aggressive style that should please Seahawks' fans who grew frustrated by Seattle's defensive regression from the prime seasons when Carroll was in charge.

That'll be part of Macdonald's overall task in Seattle after the franchise had grown stagnant. Carroll was the most successful coach in franchise history and brought Seattle its only Super Bowl title 10 years ago. But the latter stages of his tenure in Seattle fell flat.

games of the road stretch and 34 during the current six-game winning streak.

The Cyclones scored a pair of transition goals in the first period, before the Nailers got on the board, as the home side took a 2-1 lead into the intermission.

The opening marker came 4:58 into the contest, when Cole Fraser sent Sahil Panwar breaking down the left side of the ice.

Panwar quickly zipped a shot into the top-left corner of the net. Cincinnati's second goal started when Jalen Smereck gloved down a penalty kill clear at his own blueline. Smereck found Zack Andrusiak at the opposite blueline, and Andrusiak sped in with a left circle shot into the bottom right side of the cage.

Wheeling responded 1:10 later. Isaac Belliveau had his original opportunity rejected, but he crashed the net to grab the rebound and stuff it in along the left side of the ice.

Second periods have been the best for the Nailers all season long, and that continued on Wednesday, as the deficit was erased and a lead was gained with three pucks finding the twine.

The equalizer came just 93 seconds into the action, when Justin Lee tossed a puck from the goal line that flew over Olof Lindbom's right shoulder. Belliveau's second of the night gave Wheeling its first lead at the 5:08 mark, as he jumped up into the slot and drove in a one-time

shot up and into the top-right corner of the twine.

Cedric Desruisseaux added one more to the Wheeling side of the scoreboard, when he roofed a wrist shot from the right circle on the man advantage for the 6-3 triumph.

Taylor Gauthier earned his fifth straight win in goal for the Nailers, as he turned away 22 of the 25 shots he faced. Lindbom took the loss for Cincinnati, as he gave up six goals on 30 shots.

The Nailers are set to return home to West-Banco Arena, where they will play five of their next six contests.

Wheeling welcomes Orlando to town for three games this weekend, starting on a Frosty Friday with \$2 beers at 7:10. Saturday's tilt also begins at 7:10, and fans can bring their dogs to the game as part of Pups & Pucks, plus Clifford the Big Red Dog will be at the game, courtesy of West Virginia Public Broadcasting. The series with the Solar Bears concludes on a Screen Time Sunday at 4:10, when one lucky fan will win a free TV thanks to Walmart, and odd-numbered players will skate with fans following the match.

The next Big Six Promotional Game is Pittsburgh Penguins Night on Feb. 10, starring two-time Stanley Cup Champion Trevor Daley. There will also be specialty jerseys, a commemorative puck giveaway, a full team post game autograph session, and more.

REPEAT

(Continued from Page 9)

A decision by Parker Boyce (150) and a major decision by Michael Heath upped the count to 31-15.

Ryan King (165) and Jaiden Thomas (175) brought Edison to within 31-27, but three forfeits to end the match ran the count to 49-27.

"Not having guys to fill those final three weight classes really hurts," Edison head coach Luke

Spencer lamented. "Definitely not the result we were looking for, but I thought the kids wrestled well."

In the semifinals, Edison knocked off No. 1 Buckeye Local, 42-36, with wins from Logan Pittman (120), Patton Carr (126), Cole Pittman (157) and King (165).

Weir defeated Buckeye Local, 39-33 for third.

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Shadyside, Oak Glen defend OVAC Bill Hinegardner dual meet championships

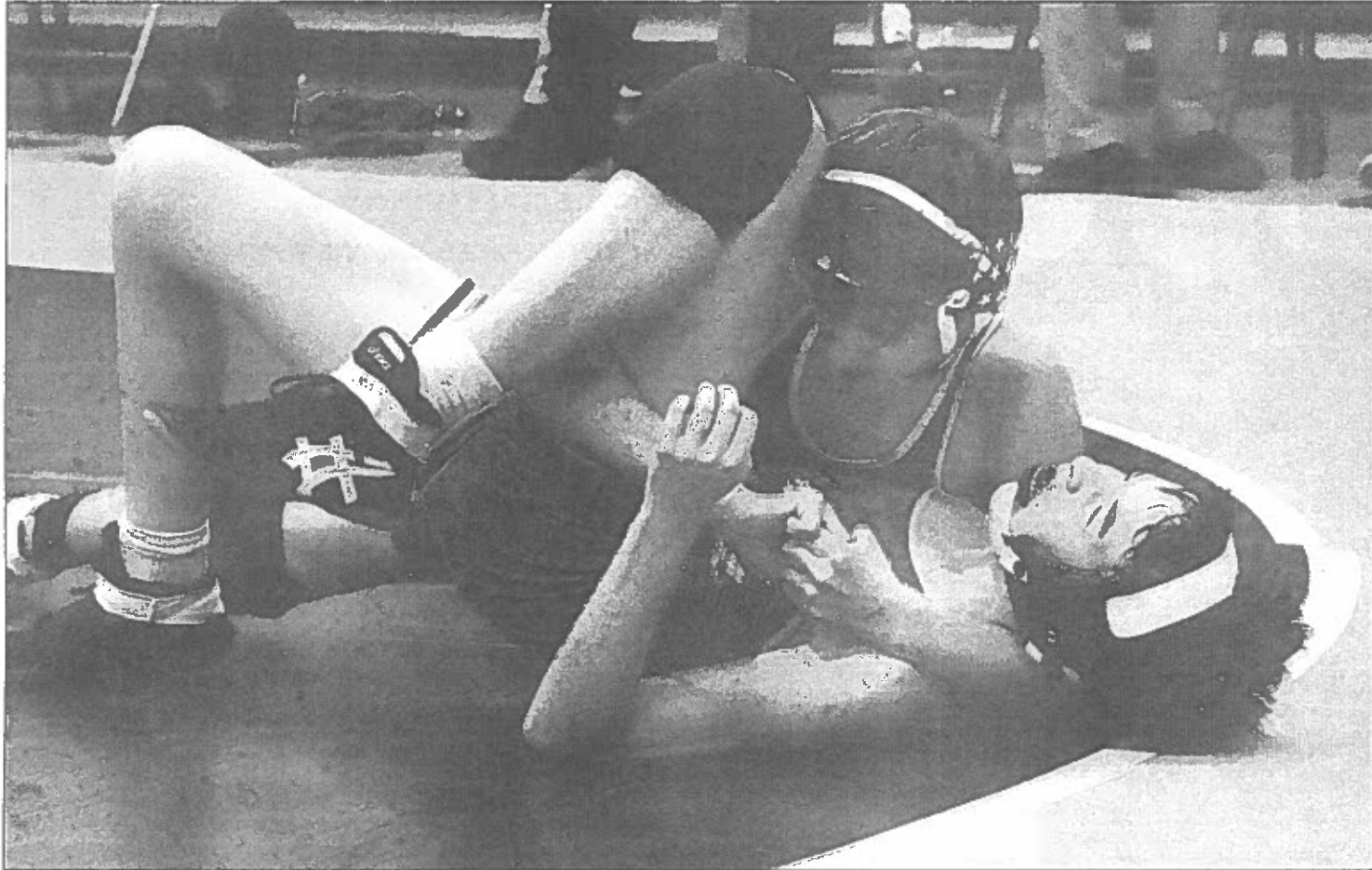


Photo by KIM NORTH

SHADYSIDE'S TREYTON Heitz pins Steubenville Catholic's Joseph Vranish during their 106-pound match Wednesday night during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 1A/2A Dual Meet championships inside the Wellness Center at Brooke High School. The Tigers won the team title.

• Shadyside Tigers rally pass Caldwell for Class 1A/2A crown

By **KIM NORTH**
Staff Writer

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• Golden Bears roar pass Weir, Edison

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In its first match of the triangular, Shadyside defeated No. 2 Steubenville Catholic, 40-28, as the Tigers led 18-0 before the Crusaders fought back to 18-16. A forfeit win at 144 and a major decision by Osman at 150 bumped the count to 28-16. Each team picked up six points on forfeits for a 34-22 count before Stillion sealed it with a pin.

Caldwell defeated Steubenville Catholic, 48-12, for second.

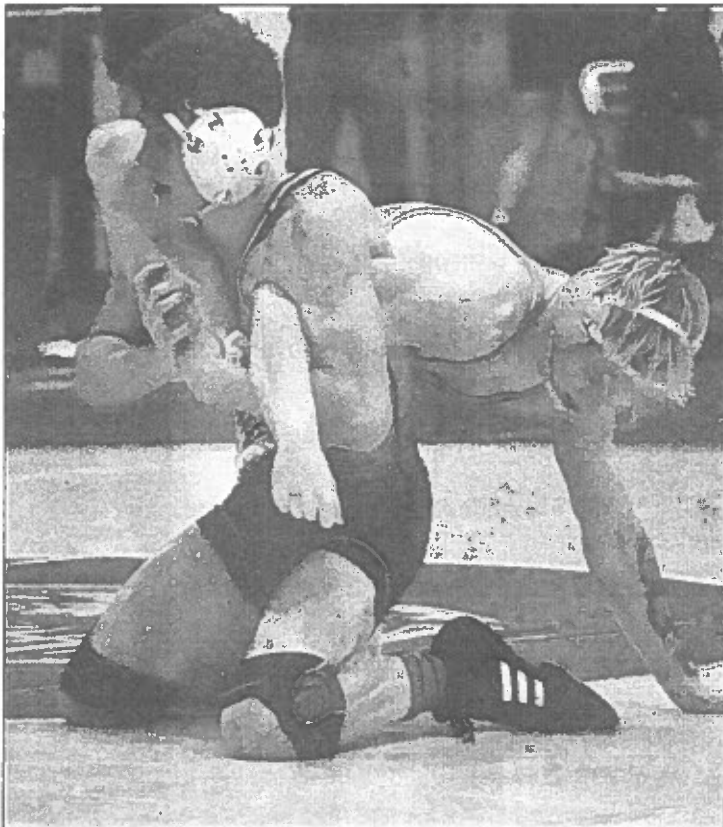


Photo by KIM NORTH

EDISON'S CAIDEN Cooley has control of Oak Glen's Hayden

New sports podcast available

■ Check out our new podcast, the Ohio Valley Sports Report. You can find it at <https://www.timesleaderonline.com/>.

Chapman eager to help Pirates elbow their way into playoff race

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Aroldis Chapman isn't in Pittsburgh to take David Bednar's job.

The seven-time All-Star closer is happy to fill whatever bullpen role a team finally ready to win sooner rather than later needs, even if that means serving in a set-up role to Bednar, himself a two-time All-Star.

"We haven't discussed it yet but it's just something I'm pretty easy going about," Chapman said via a translator after his \$10.5 million, one-year contract was announced Wednesday. "There's just no issue for me. I'm flexible and I know that there's a closer here and a very good one at that."

The 35-year-old, who turns 36 at the end of February, was one of the best relievers during his prime with Cincinnati and the New York Yankees. He evolved into more of an eighth-inning role over the last three seasons while pitching for the Yankees, Kansas City and the Texas Rangers.

Asked whether he still considers himself a closer, Chapman shrugged.

"When I started off my career, I wasn't a closer," he said. "I was a sixth, seventh, eighth-inning guy. A couple years with the Reds and I really got that opportunity to be a closer. Now, I just consider myself someone who can really adapt to what I need to do. I'm a pitcher who can adjust to whatever is needed from me."

Chapman is 50-40 with a 2.53 ERA and 321 saves spread across 14 seasons. The hard-throwing left-hander has won a pair of World Series, first with the Chicago Cubs in 2016 and the Texas Rangers last fall.

His average fastball velocity of 99.0 mph was his highest since 2017, an uptick he attributed to a commitment to training after a poor 2022 season with New York.

The signing came as a bit of a surprise by the Pirates, who annually have among the lowest payrolls. Chapman gives them a proven veteran in front of Bednar and — if Pittsburgh finds itself out of the mix by the trade deadline — a potentially inviting bargaining chip.

Chapman — who battled the Pirates for six years early in his career with Cincinnati — is optimistic Pittsburgh is ready to contend after posting a 15-win improvement from 2022 (61-100) to 2023 (76-86).

"It's a young team and they seem really thirsty to win and I'm

Friday,
February 2, 2024

SPORTS

Jets top Big Reds in defensive battle

By NICK HENTHORN
Sports Editor

BELLAIRE — In their third meeting of the season, there wasn't much the Bellaire Big Reds or Union Local Jets could do to surprise each other.

Points were hard to come by in a battle between two familiar teams, the Jets pushing forward to an eventual 41-31 victory on the road.

Playing in an OVAC 3A consolation finals, Lauren Miller scored 20 points to lead Union Local, though it was the Jets' defense which stole the show Thursday.

"We think they're a pretty good team," Union Local head coach Scooter Tolzda said of Bellaire. "They've got some really good offensive players. We told our girls after we got beat Monday, that it was going to be a battle of the wills, who wanted to win the game the most.

"I'll give our defense credit, we really take pride in our defense. I don't think it was a great

offensive game. [Bellaire] had a lot to do with that. We hung in there and our defense came through for us today."

Union Local fell to conference 3A No. 1 seed Martins Ferry in the OVAC semifinals, while Bellaire were bested by Fort Frye. The Cadets and Purple Riders play for the conference title on Saturday.

Zara Harveth scored 15 to lead Bellaire—scoring all seven of Bellaire's points in the first quarter, the Jets taking an 11-7 lead going into the second quarter.

Eliana Mason scored 10 points to follow Harveth, and likewise scored all of Bellaire's points in the second quarter, the home team trailing 18-11 at halftime.

With both teams stuck in the mud throughout the first half, it was a scoring burst from Miller to start the second half which made the difference Thursday.

See JETS, Page B2

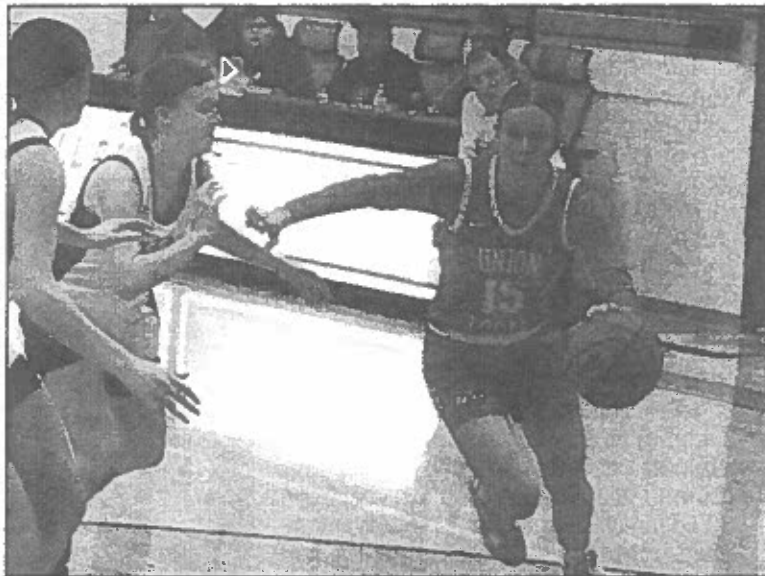


Photo by NICK HENTHORN

UNION LOCAL'S Lauren Miller drives to the basket from the wing against the Bellaire Big Reds inside "The House of Champions" on Thursday. Miller scored 20 points in a 41-31 Jets win.

Barnesville rolls past Martins Ferry for OVAC Class 3A championship

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

MOUNDSVILLE — Barnesville once again flexed its muscles during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 3A Dual Meet Championships Thursday night inside the John Marshall Field House.

The top seeds barely broke a sweat in rolling past No. 4 Magnolia, 72-4, before dismantling third-seeded Martins Ferry, 71-3, in the championship match.

Martins Ferry had outlasted No. 2 Linsly, 39-27, in a semifinal. The Cadets took third with a 48-33 victory over the Blue Eagles.

"I think a lot of people expected us to come in here and win big, but I'm not sure how many had us winning by these margins," Barnesville head coach Jayson Stephen said.

The title is the third straight for the Shamrocks and completes a double-double as they also won the Class 3A and Overall titles at the 70th annual OVAC Ron Mauck Tournament inside Wheeling's WesBanco Arena.

"This is nice for the kids. We bumped some kids around and got some kids in the lineup in order to get them some mat time," Stephen explained. "I thought everyone wrestled well."

During the two duals, Barnesville went an impressive 26-2, with many of the victories coming by pins.

In the finals against the Purple Riders, the Shamrocks recorded three straight pins

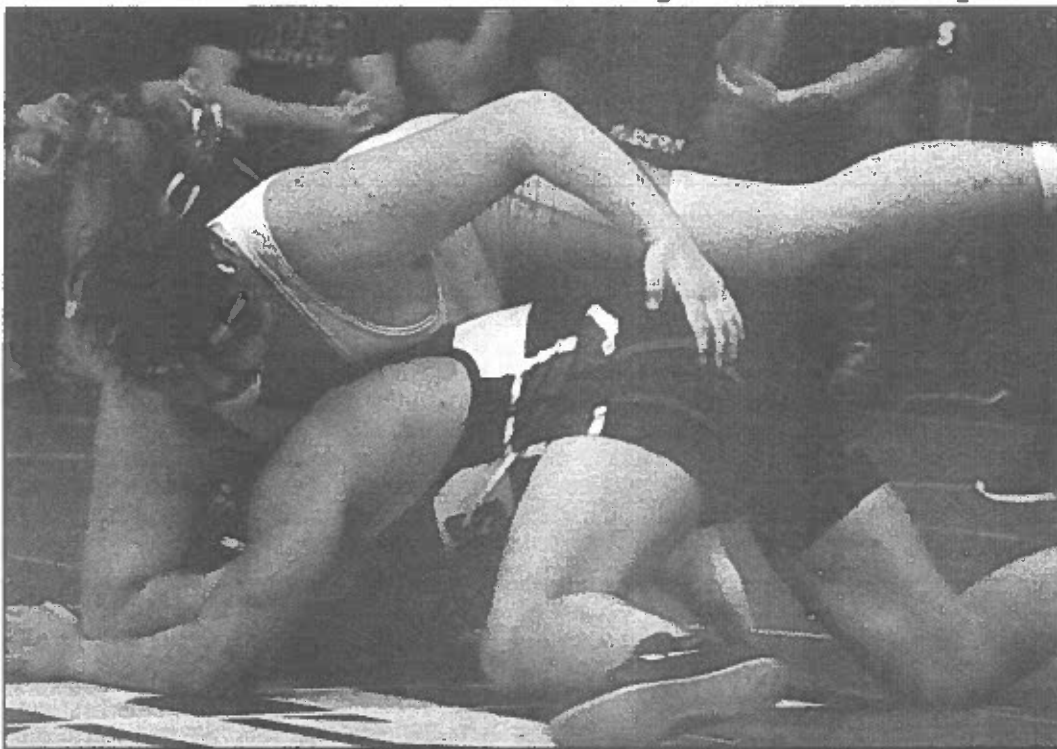


Photo by KIM NORTH

BARNESVILLE'S BLAKE Kirk records a takedown of Martins Ferry's Alex Carpino during their 285-pound match Thursday night during the OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 3A Dual Meet Championship inside the John Marshall Field House in Moundsville. Kirk won by pin and the Shamrocks won their third straight title.

for an 18-0 margin and never looked back in building the margin to 71-0 before dropping the final match at 215.

Blake Kirk (285) started the pinfest in 1:27 and Ben Ralston (106) and Johnathan Huntsman (113) followed in 2:36 and 34 seconds, respectively. A 7-3 decision by Ayden Andrews (120) bumped the count to 21-0 and Conner Wilson (126) made it 27-0 with a fall in 1:08. Brayden Trigg's 13-7 decision at 132 preceded a lightning-quick 13-second pin from Ohio State University recruit Dakota King (138).

Senior Karson Milhoan (144) posted a 16-0 technical fall and Johnathan Foster (150) was awarded a forfeit before defending Ohio Division III state champion and Cleveland State signee Reese Stephen (157) pinned his opponent in 1:13. The King brothers - Skyler (165) and Ayden (175) - recorded pins in 1:25 and 42 ticks, respectively. Hines Ford (190) ended the onslaught with a 26-second fall.

Martins Ferry avoided a shutout when Tayson Palmer (215) earned a 10-4 decision. Barnesville is back in ac-

tion Saturday at home in a Division III Eastern District Regional Dual Meet Tournament. One semifinal has Marion Elgin and Malvern squaring off, while the Shamrocks await the winner of Caldwell and Tuscarawas Valley. The winner advances to state competition.

"The kids are happy with this team title, but they have bigger goals in mind and are working hard everyday to accomplish them," Coach Stephen said.

Barnesville is the top-ranked Division III team in the Buckeye State.

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Ohio State erupts in 39-point third quarter for rout vs. Wisconsin

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Jacy Sheldon scored 17 points, Cotie McMahon had 15 and Eboni Walker 11 as No. 8 Ohio State won its eighth straight game, 87-49 over Wisconsin on Thursday night.

The Buckeyes (18-3, 9-1 Big Ten) shot 50% (33 for 66) from the field, their best performance in nine games, and went 13 for 16 from the line.

Ohio State led by five points at the break and scored a program record-tying 39 points in the third quarter that extended its lead to a game-high 24 points late in the fourth.

"We had a spirited conversation at halftime just about our, really, it was our mental energy," Ohio State coach Kevin McGuff said. "I thought our physical energy was fine, but it just, we weren't really locked in mentally. They did a great job coming out of the locker room and kind of imposing our will on the second half."

Serah Williams led Wisconsin (10-10, 3-7) with 16 points and 11 rebounds in her seventh straight game with a double-double.

Wisconsin led 16-15 after the first quarter despite shooting 38% and the Badgers grabbed six of their 16 offensive rebounds in the opening period while Ohio State had none.

"I think in that third quarter, really, they turned up the heat a little bit with their press," Wisconsin coach Marisa Moseley said. "We had kind of back-to-back turnovers coming straight out of the halftime and I think that rattled our kids a bit, and really, it became a little bit of a snowball effect with the turnovers."

The Buckeyes went on a 7-0 run and claimed the lead with about six minutes left in the second quarter. Ohio State shot 8 for 9 from the free throw line in the period and never trailed again.

"I think our main focus moving towards any game is just being the best that we can be and playing team basketball at the end of the day," Walker said.

BIG PICTURE

Wisconsin: The Badgers had their two-game winning streak halted after shooting 32.7% (17 for 52) from the field, their worst performance in three games.

Ohio State: The Buckeyes' season-best winning streak is nine games

Carrasco returns to Guardians on minor league contract

CLEVELAND (AP) — Carlos Carrasco is coming home to Cleveland.

The popular pitcher officially signed a minor league contract with the Guardians on Thursday, with an invitation to camp at spring training. Carrasco's return was reported previously by the AP and other media outlets last weekend.

The 36-year-old Carrasco will get a chance to make Cleveland's roster in Arizona. If he does, Carrasco will get a \$2 million base salary and a chance to earn another \$2 million in starts. The team's

land before he was traded in the 2021 mega-deal that sent All-Star shortstop Francisco Lindor to the New York Mets. Carrasco went 88-73 with a 3.77 ERA in 242 games, 195 starts, with Cleveland.

Carrasco ranks fourth in club history with 1,305 strikeouts. He led the AL with 18 wins in 2017 and finished fourth in Cy Young voting.

Unfortunately, Carrasco wasn't part of Cleveland's World Series run in 2016 after he was struck by a line drive and fractured his right hand in a September

who embraced Carrasco after the Venezuela native was diagnosed with chronic myeloid leukemia in 2019. Carrasco won the Roberto Clemente Award that year for his community efforts in Cleveland, Tampa and his home country.

After he was traded to New York, Carrasco went 15-7 with a 3.97 ERA in 61 starts. Carrasco made \$14 million last season.

The top of Cleveland's rotation is set, but if Carrasco has a solid spring, he could give the club some depth. Carrasco

Steubenville brings home title from Bill Hinegardner 5A dual meet championship

By KIM NORTH
Staff Writer

MOUNDSVILLE — Steubenville was tired of finishing as the bridesmaid in the last two OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 5A Dual Meet Championships.

The third time was a charm as top-seeded Big Red ousted No. 4 and defending champion Wheeling Park, 42-30, in the semifinals before doubling up No. 3 John Marshall, 48-24, in the title tilt Thursday night inside the John Marshall Field House.

"This is nice to be bringing home the title," Steubenville head coach Lucas Huffman. "We came up a little short the last two years, but I'm really pleased with how the kids competed tonight."

John Marshall took a 6-0 lead when Caleb Yates (285) posted a pin in the first match. A forfeit win by Frank Guntrum (106) and pin by his sister, Talea (113), gave Big Red a 12-6 advantage, but the Monarchs came right back with a decision by Gabe Chaplin (120) and a pin by Zander Ward (126) for a 15-12 edge.

However, all season Steubenville's strength has been its middleweight. Last night was no exception.

Behind pins by Charlie Abbott (132), Cal Beadling (138), Cooper Smith (144) and Brody Saccoccia (150) and a decision by Savier Faulks (157), Big Red ran away to a 39-15 margin and never looked back.

"We've got some horses through the middle of our lineup," Huffman noted. "But I think everyone contributed tonight. I'm proud of each and every one of them."

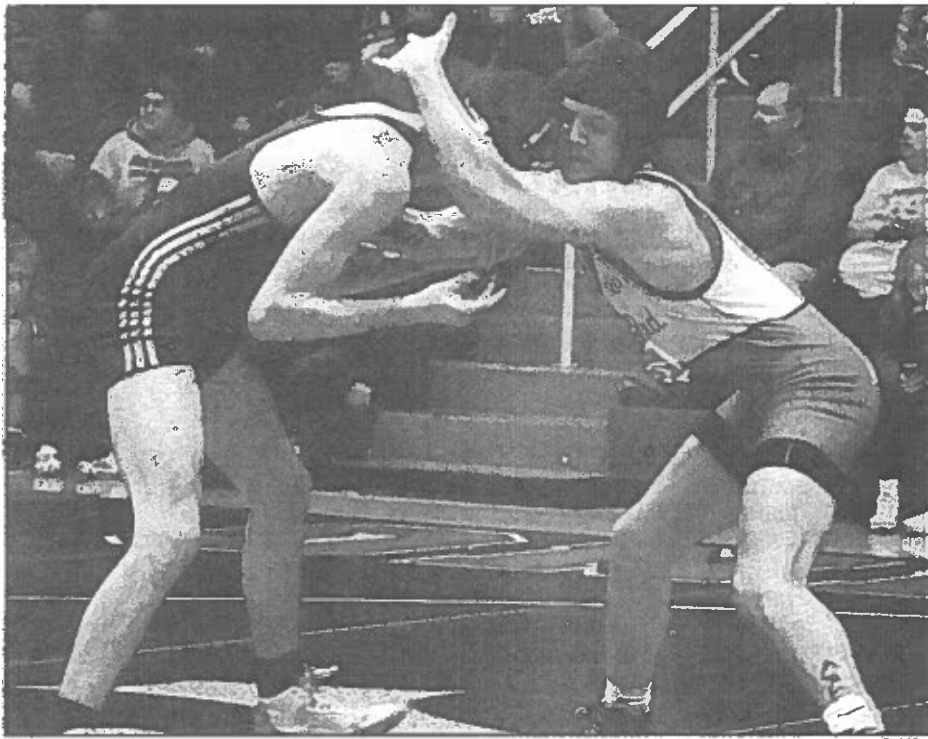


Photo by KIM NORTH

STUEBENVILLE'S COOPER Smith, right, ties up with John Marshall's Waylon Wyckoff during their 144-pound match during Thursday night's OVAC Bill Hinegardner Class 5A Dual Meet championship bout inside the John Marshall Field House in Moundsville. Smith won by pin and Big Red defeated the Monarchs, 48-24, for the title.

Brook Harrison (165) and Maverick Lemasters (190) had late victories for John Marshall, as did Steubenville's Lodyn Babel (175).

"Hopefully, this is something we can build off of heading into Saturday's action," Huffman said.

Big Red returns to action Saturday at Indian Valley in the Ohio Division II Eastern District team duals against

West Holmes. The winner meets the winner of the New Philadelphia-Indian Valley dual for the title and a berth in the state tournament.

This is Steubenville's 10th championship since 2013, with some coming in Class 4A, according to the OVAC website.

Wheeling Park bounced back with a 42-39 win over Brooke for third place.

The Wheeling Miners Arena Football league is looking for players

WHEELING — The Wheeling Miners Arena Football League team is looking for players. A tryout will be held on March 15 at The Highlands Sports Complex.

Registration begins at 10 a.m. Pre-registration can be done online at <https://gowvminers.com/player-registration.html>

The Miners will play an eight-game schedule, with five of those games being played inside WesBanco Arena in downtown Wheeling. All games are at 7 p.m. The home portion of the schedule begins on Friday, April 19 when the Jersey Bandits visit. The Maryland Warriors come to the Friendly City on Saturday, May 4, with the Delaware Bullsharks in town the next Saturday (May 11). The regular season concludes with home games with the Steel City Stampede (Sat., June 1) and the Maryland Eagles (Sat., June 8).

Away games are with the Steel City Stampede (Sat., April 13), Maryland Eagles (Sat., April 27) and Jersey Bandits (Sat., May 18).

Season tickets are currently on sale. They are priced at \$170 per ticket for section 100; \$90 per ticket for section 200; and \$55 per ticket for section 300. Season ticket holders enjoy exclusive benefits, including priority access to playoff tickets and, in the event of a championship game hosted by the Miners, the first opportunity to purchase those tickets.

Single-game tickets can be purchased for \$45 for section 100; \$28 for section 200; and \$18 for section 300.

• Crosby

Continued from Page B1

"The fact that I don't have Jake as a partner is probably the only negative, but I haven't met my partner yet and I'm sure we'll have a good time, too," Spieth said. "Most of the amateurs who weren't able to come back, especially the entertainers, are bummed and are curious about what the future holds and I don't know what that is,

either. That's the only thing I'll miss."

Brady (with New England native Keegan Bradley) and Allen (with "Cashmere" Keith Mitchell) are in the same group. The real rivalry for Allen might be Rodgers, who is in the group behind and playing with Beau Hossler.

Rodgers won the 54-hole pro-am last year while playing with a 10 handicap index alongside Ben Silver-

man, who was 1-over par for three days. They finished at 26 under. Do the math. Rodgers this year has a handicap of 4. What a comeback.

For the rest of the field, it turns more serious, and it figures to be a battle of the elements. Pebble was always the toughest of the courses to play in the wind because it is so exposed to the Pacific, and now players get three rounds on it.

"I'm extremely excited about the idea that you could have three to eight guys in the world top 10, 15, coming down the stretch at Pebble Beach," Spieth said. "Regardless of the conditions, that would be something that would be very exciting to watch. Other than the U.S. Open, that hasn't really been possible in this event."

"So I think the field this week will make it possibly the best AT&T yet."

• Jets

Continued from Page B1

Miller made a 3-point-er on the first possession of the third quarter to put Union Local up 10. Then the senior canned another, then another, and by quarter's end Miller had scored 13 points in the third, and Union Local led 33-22.

"Union Local's a good team, they're a very well-coached team so you know you're always going to get a good effort," Bellaire head coach John Farrier said. "They play to their strengths - I don't know how many Miller had, but she had a lot. She's a really nice player, she's worked really hard to get where she's at, and she's come a long way from her freshman year. Let me tell you, I'll be glad to see her gone next year."

"I thought we did a good job on her, I thought we did well in our halfcourt defense today. I was happy with our effort, we're down one starter, we have two freshmen who played valuable minutes who haven't gotten much of an opportunity this year. We saw some growth; one hit a big 3, one got some rebounds. I think

on Thursday.

For the Jets, Miller's 20 points was followed by nine points from Myiah Martin. Laken Vinskovich grabbed eight rebounds, blocked two shots and scored five points.

"That was big. We were up seven points, and the way they [Bellaire] are, they're so explosive, they've got the capability to press you," Tolzda said of his team's third quarter. "That was really big. Lauren's a senior, we kind of expect that out of her and she's been doing that all year for us. I also thought Myiah Martin hit some big buckets. I just thought overall, everybody helped hold them to 31 points. You hold the other team to 31, I like our chances, and I thought we did a good job rebounding the ball. I was proud of them."

Union Local outrebounded the Big Reds 27-20, but Bellaire committed fewer turnovers, 11-15.

"I was happy with our effort," Farrier said. "I thought we left some baskets out there but I was happy with our effort. I thought we



GOOD LUCK

Indian Creek Lady Redskins

&



Buckeye Local Lady Panthers

OVAC Class 4A Championship

February 3rd - 12pm

Harrison Central High School