Connecticut high school wrestling post season: Open medal round results

By Connecticut High School Wrestling Examiner, Matthew Volpe

Sunday afternoon, CT crowned the Open champs of 2010 and the top four placewinners in each weight punched their tickets to the New England Championships next weekend. The finals truly displayed the best of CT wrestling, and seven matches were decided in overtime.

Middletown's Victor Ekpenyong (112) earned the Outstanding Wrestling award after defeating East Lyme's Ross Spencer by technical fall in the finals, 17-2. Ekpenyong dominated the tournament, tech-falling Xavier's Ricky Jorge in the quarters and majoring 2009 champ Brian Jennings of Danbury in the semis. Jorge and Jennings finished fifth and fourth, respectively.

Law's Jason Richardson (119) earned the fastest award as he collected three pins in 7:06. Richardson pinned Housatonic's Dominic Ghi, Fitch's Cody Hawley and RHAM's Will Gerardi en route to a fourth-place finish.

Danbury passed Day-1 leader South Windsor in the team standings and finished with 98.5 points to win their tenth straight Open title. The Hatters won seven matches in the medal round, and will take five wrestlers to New Englands.

Strong wrestleback performances from Dylan Bryant (4th, 103), Brian Jennings (4th, 112), JD Damici (5th, 125), John Smith (3rd, 160) and Dylan Hancock (4th, 215) and Charlie Costanzo's third Open title at 119 powered Danbury's Day-2 comeback.

South Windsor finished second with 84. The Bobcats put three in the finals and won one championship as Joe Sargenti defended his 135-pound title. Casey Mitchell (130) and Jake O'dell (145) each fell in overtime.

With a little help from Nonnewaug, New Milford finished third (67.5 points). Hand finished fourth with 64, and could have taken the third spot if Eddie Carroll had won in the finals at 125. But Nonnewaug's Tyler Tilbe pulled out a 5-3 overtime win over Carroll and helped the Green Wave lock up their bronze-medal effort.

The FCIAC was well represented at 103, claiming three of the top six spots. Bryant, Greenwich's Johnny D'elia (5th) and Warde's Pharoh Eaton (6th) all stood on the Open
podium.

Warde’s Evan Fraser (125) avenged his FCIAC finals loss to Damici by defeating him in the consolation semis, 2-1. Damici edged Newington's Chris Chorzepa, 7-6, for fifth, while Fraser finished fourth after being pinned by Windham's Miguel Calixto in the third-place bout.

After a tough 4-2 loss to eventual champ Brendan Quinn in the semis, Cheney Tech's Forrest Dolby (130) rebounded to take third, tech-falling Simsbury's Dan Calzarrete and pinning Derby's Tyler O'Connor on the way.

New Milford's Anthony Terlizzi (140) made an impressive run to the podium, finishing fourth. Seeded fifteenth, Terlizzi knocked out Shelton's Ricky Jordan and Guilford's Tim Proctor, then edged Xavier's Tyler Cunningham, 3-2, to qualify for New Englands.

Warde freshman Thomas Anania (152) burst onto the scene last week by making the Class L finals. His postseason success continued at the Open, where he made the semifinals before dropping his next two matches to finish sixth.

John Smith (160) played an instrumental role in Danbury's team success. Smith took third after defeating Hall’s Justin Scalise for the second time in the tournament, winning 12-6 in the consolation finals.

At 171, the consolation semifinals were composed entirely of Class M wrestlers. Shane Sullivan of Ledyard and Devin Covone of Bacon advanced to the third-place bout, where Sullivan was victorious, 5-1. RHAM's Eric Brainard bested Berlin's Jack Banks, 7-4, for fifth.

Wrestling up a weight, New Milford's Adam Lynch (215) made a strong run to the bronze medal. Lynch lost his first-round match yesterday but wrestled all the way to take third, knocking out Somers' Class S champ Ken Vollaro and Law's Ted Kostopolous on the way. He edged Hancock, 3-2 in overtime, in the consolation finals.

Championship match recaps

103: Andrew Chase (Bristol Eastern) def. Conor Kirkegard (New Milford), 7-5 OT

Chase scored a quick takedown in the first period and rode Kirkegard out. In the second, Chase took bottom and escaped, capitalizing on Kirkegard's aggressive attempts to work turns and finding a way to get back to his feet.

Chase scored another takedown off a knee pick, but Kirkegard scrambled well and...
floated his hips over Chase’s to pick up a reversal at the end of the second. Kirkegard took bottom in the third and scored an escape, then hit a low single to score a takedown and knot the match at five.

In OT, Kirkegard took the initial shot but Chase stuffed him and spun behind for the winning takedown, avenging his loss to Kirkegd in the Class L finals last week.

112: Victor Ekpenyong (Middletown) def. Ross Spencer (East Lyme), 17-2
Spencer moved his feet well in the first and looked to keep some distance from Ekpenyong, trying to neutralize his speed and aggressiveness in neutral. Ekpenyong scored a takedown on a double, then let Spencer back to his feet.

In the second, Ekpenyong turned up the intensity and started pushing and throwing Spencer around the mat. He picked up another takedown, hitting the double again and lifting Spencer off the mat. In the third, Spencer took top, but Ekpenyong escaped and continued to control the match, hitting two big pancakes to rack up points.

119: Charlie Costanzo (Danbury) def. Taylor Grauer (Windham), 3-1
Costanzo controlled the pace of the match from the start. The two traded takedown attempts and countered each other well in the first. Costanzo rode Grauer hard in the second but eventually the Whippet escaped after hitting a switch.

Costanzo took bottom in the third but Grauer let him up to have a full period to go for a takedown. After some back-and-forth, Costanzo hit an outside single and tripped Grauer for what would be the winning takedown.

125: Tyler Tilbe (Nonnewaug) def. Eddie Carroll (Hand), 5-3 OT
Carroll struck first, taking Tilbe down with a strong double. Tilbe moved quickly on bottom and escaped by standing and cutting off, then scrambling out of bounds. In the second, Carroll took bottom and escaped with a cutoff of his own.

Tilbe turned up the tempo in the second, becoming more aggressive and pushing the pace. He got in deep on a low single off the whistle but Carroll defended it well and kept him from scoring. Tilbe took bottom in the third, escaping and immediately scoring a takedown to take a one-point lead.

Carroll escaped to tie the match after Tilbe got too high on his ride. As the match went on, Carroll seemed to fade while Tilbe peaked. He spun behind after a flurry in
Overtime to pick up the takedown and the win.

130: Brendan Quinn (Pomperaug) def. Casey Mitchell (South Windsor), 4-2 OT
The two finalists traded shots in the first, but neither could get in deep enough to score. Quinn took bottom and was ridden for most of the period, but got to his feet late in the period. He started a standing switch and came back up to his feet with Mitchell's leg in the air. He tripped the Bobcat to score a reversal.

Mitchell took bottom and scored a reversal to even the match. Quinn nearly had a reversal at the end of the third as he tried to scoot around and hook Mitchell's leg, but couldn't. In OT, Quinn hit a strong double on the edge and stuck his toes for the takedown.

135: Joe Sargenti (South Windsor) def. Brandon Walsh (Griswold), 7-1
Sargenti controlled the entire match. He scored a takedown in each period and added an escape in the second. He cut Walsh in the third and continued to push the pace, actively looking for another takedown right up until the final whistle.

140: Nick Giulietti (Sheehan) def Aaron Cardona (Maloney), 5-4
Giulietti scored a takedown off a single in the first. He chose neutral in the second and controlled the tie-ups, making it hard for Cardona to get any offense going. Cardona took bottom in the third and notched an escape, but Giulietti took him back down on a long, driving double.

Cardona hit a reversal at the end of the third, but it left him one point short, and Giulietti stayed tough on bottom to hold on for the win.

145: PJ Mickens (Bacon) def. Jake O'dell (South Windsor), 5-3 OT
O'dell picked up a takedown in the first after getting behind Mickens off a scramble and bringing him to mat. Mickens took bottom in the second and O'dell cut him. O'dell pushed the pace and Mickens was warned for stalling.

After the stall call, Mickens turned it up and hit a high-crotch that led to a takedown. O'dell escaped in the third to tie the match. Mickens came out in OT as the aggressor, getting in on several shots that O'dell defended.

On his third attempt, Mickens got in deep on a double and O'dell tried to funk him, but Mickens stopped it and secured the takedown.
152: Andrew Ford (Bethel) def. Jesse Broderick (New Fairfield), 13-3 
Ford completely controlled the entire match, imposing his will on Broderick in neutral. He scored two takedowns in the first, one off the same headlock he hit in the Class M finals. He also picked up two near-fall points on a cheap tilt.

Broderick took bottom in the second but Ford cut him, keeping the match in neutral. He scored another takedown, then cut Broderick again. When Broderick took a shot of his own, Ford pancaked him to pick up five points.

Ford chose neutral in the third, and stalked Broderick until he hit a strong double on the edge for his fourth takedown of the match.

160: Alex Carpenter (Amity) pins Dustin Wilcox (Montville) 
After a scoreless first period, Carpenter scored an escape in the second after choosing bottom. He controlled the match by imposing his tie-ups and pushing forward. When Wilcox chose bottom in the third, Carpenter locked up a cradle and rocked him back for the fall.

171: Kyle Copes (Cheshire) def. Devon Carrillo (Middletown), 11-3 
Copes scored a takedown early but Carrillo reversed him with a Peterson. As Carrillo worked for the turn off of a Penn State ride, he gave up a reversal. Copes took bottom in the second but Carrillo rode him out, putting him in danger of back points several times.

In the third, Carrillo took down but Copes cut him, feeling confident on his feet. He scored another takedown off a boot scoot, then picked up two near-fall points after coming up on top of Carrillo in a scramble. Copes used a bow-and-arrow cradle to pick up three more near-fall and ice the match.

189: Shane Battista (Waterford) def. Tito Slaughter (New Haven), 3-2 2OT 
The first period was scoreless with neither wrestler committing to a shot. Slaughter took bottom in the second and scored a reversal as he stood up, cut, stuffed Battista's head and spun behind. Battista escaped with a stand-up and the two continued to stalk each other.

Battista scored another escape in the third to force overtime. After another scoreless period in neutral, Slaughter took bottom and was ridden out. Battista then took bottom and scored an escape as time expired to win.

215: Pat Gillen (Shelton) def. Luke Wiggins (Waterford), 4-2 OT 
Wiggins shocked the Hillhouse crowd when he scored the first takedown, driving Gillen to the mat with a double. Gillen escaped but Wiggins pushed the pace in the first, nearly
scoring another takedown on the edge.

Wiggins took bottom in the second and Gillen used a crab ride to effectively control him and ride the Lancer out. Gillen put Wiggins in danger several times with a cheap tilt. He took bottom and scored another escape to knot the match at 2-2.

Wiggins looked tired in OT and his feet were not moving like they did the first period, allowing Gillen to get in on an outside single and trip him for the winning takedown.

285: Ronnie Walter (Nonnewaug) def. Jeff Starr (McMahon), 3-1 OT
The heavyweights pummeled hard in the first but neither could gain any control and score. They traded escapes in the second and third, continuing to trade attempts at bear hugs and snatch singles. In OT, Starr slipped while trying to throw and Walter collapsed on him for the takedown.

Complete brackets and team results from the 2010 Open can be found on the CIAC website. Photos from the medal round, including championship bouts, can be found here.