

Danbury cruises to another FCIAC wrestling title

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David Hahn

The story of the 2012 Joe Sikorski FCIAC wrestling tournament could be told by the hair color of Danbury coach Ricky Shook.

Every season, Shook makes a bet with his wrestlers. If at least 10 Hatters reach the finals of the FCIAC championships, Shook dyes his hair along with the rest of the team.

Danbury went through liters of bleach on this day -- and Shook's hair was among those sporting a different look prior to Saturday evening's finals.

The Hatters, the No. 1 ranked team in the state, left no doubt who the kings of the mat are in the FCIAC this season as they amassed 333 points and ran away with the league title.

It was the second straight FCIAC crown and 25th in the last 26 years for the perennial powerhouse Hatters, who sent 13 wrestlers to the finals. A staggering 10 of them were crowned champions -- including three sets of brothers.

Even for the league's most decorated program, this was quite a night at New Canaan High School.

"We wrestled great this weekend," Shook said. "Having three sets of brothers win was special and fitting, we're all family. No we've got more work to do."

Warde, the 2010 champion, was the runner-up with 189.5 points, while Greenwich was third with 136.5 -- just ahead of Trumbull (136). Ludlowe rounded out the top five.

There was simply no slowing the Hatters express. They had already wrapped up the team crown prior to the finals, and then started the marquee matches with gold-medal showings in the first five bouts.

The first championship match actually featured two Danbury freshmen, as Paulo Freitas outlasted teammate Jason Gomez, 8-6, in overtime.

Perhaps Danbury's most surprising title came in the heavyweight division where Jevon Pegues decisioned top-seeded Mike Money, or Warde. It was the first loss of the season for Money, who entered 26-0.

"I wrestled hard," Pegues said. "I had a lot of support, this means a lot."

At 138 pounds, Danbury's Shane Jennings ended Trumbull senior Ben Anderson's perfect season with a hard-fought 8-4 victory.

Brothers Juan Garcia (152 pounds), a freshman, and Eddie Garcia (220) both won by pinfall in the finals. Then there was Chris Bryant, who decisioned top-seeded Kevin Hall, 8-3, in the 113-pound finals and older brother Dylan Bryant, who captured his third individual league title with a 14-3 major decision of Ludlowe's Henry Wales.

The other set of siblings to win for the Hatters were Will Jack (182) and younger brother Kevin Jack (106), who remained undefeated with his second closely-contested FCIAC championship victory over Westhill's Pascal Medor, 3-1.

Stamford, behind champions Ben Pierre-Saint and Miguel Nieto, was sixth with 84 points.