

Defending State Open champion New Fairfield looks to maintain success

By Jon Chik Published 8:53 pm, Wednesday, December 21, 2016

BROOKFIELD — There's a new sheriff in town.

After watching the likes of Newtown, New Milford and Danbury dominate the championship scene for years, the New Fairfield wrestling team was ready for its moment in the sun in last season's State Open.

And the Rebels captured it, winning their first state crown of any kind since bringing home the Class M title in 1998.

"It was great, especially since we were the underdogs," New Fairfield captain **Avery Shay** said. "It gives us something to look forward to now. We liked that feeling, and we want to do it again."

"Last year was amazing," New Fairfield captain **William Magrino** said. "It was an honor to wrestle with the kids that were on the team last year and to hold a title such as the State Open championship."

So, with a bevy of top-notch grapplers having graduated in the spring, can New Fairfield remain in championship contention in the SWC, Class M and State Open pictures?

"The SWC I think is probably the best conference league in Connecticut with wrestling," New Fairfield captain **Dan Gioia** said. "We've got some tough competitors, but I think honestly, we'll come out on top again. That's our goal this year."

The Rebels left absolutely no doubt in Wednesday afternoon's away tilt at **Brookfield High School**, capturing 12 of the 14 varsity matches and picking up a 68-12 victory.

Ashton Capichiano (106 pounds), Hunter Chin (113), Jason Vitrit (132), Colman Doucette (140), **Ben Reilly** (145), Avery Shay (152), **Marc Jones** (160), Dan Gioia (170) and **Tyler King** (195) all won via pin fall against the Bobcats.

The Rebels return three grapplers from last year's All-SWC Teams: Shay (First Team), Chin (Honorable Mention) and Zach Kalmanson (Honorable Mention)

Shay captured the 138-pound Open, Class M and SWC titles last year.

Wednesday's win was New Fairfield's first of the season and came on the heels of a rough 54-15 opening night loss at Newtown.

"I think the Newtown match when we got our butts kicked kind of woke our eyes up a little bit," New Fairfield coach **Paul Musso** said. "I think it was a blessing in disguise. We had a long talk and sat down and we're going through growing pains right now. But I'm happy with the kids; it's going to be fun."

Brookfield's (0-2) two victors were **Logan Schaab** and **Wyatt Smiley**, who each won via pin fall in 4:00 and 34 seconds at 182 and 285, respectively.

New Fairfield (1-1) is aware of the competition it will face in the SWC (and beyond), but the Rebels fully believe that another championship season is within its reach.

"I think the kids are eager to learn," said Musso, whose team entered the season ranked 11th in the Wrestling Coaches' Preseason Poll. "We're positive and we're excited, and I think at the end of the season we're going to be right in there. Maybe not the whole Open thing, but the Class M I really believe we are."

jchik@newstimes.com; Twitter: @jchik17

NEW FAIRFIELD 68, BROOKFIELD 12

106: Ashton Capichiano (NF) pinned **Drake Nguyen** :42; **113:** Hunter Chin (NF) pinned **Nour Douieb** :18; **120:** Zach Kalmanson (NF) tech. fall Louis Stabile 15-0; **126:** **Braden Reilly** (NF) dec. Matt Ehrhard 4-3; **132:** Jason Vitrit (NF) pinned Tyler Pinto :16; **138:** Colman Doucette (NF) pinned Zane Grabko 1:25; **145:** Ben Reilly (NF) pinned Julian Checco 3:11; **152:** Avery Shay (NF) pinned Gustavo Rocha :26; **160:** **Marc Jonas** (NF) pinned **Blair Ayala** :29; **170:** Dan Gioia (NF) pinned Connor McRedmond :27; **182:** Logan Schaab (B) pinned Aaron Mullally 4:00; **195:** Tyler King (NF) pinned Adam Frame 1:31 **220:** **Shane Mallory** (NF) won by forfeit; **285:** Wyatt Smiley (B) pinned **Omar Castellanos** :34. **Records:** New Fairfield 1-1; Brookfield 0-2.