

New Milford captures 10th SWC Championship in last 11 seasons

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New Milford's Brandon Leonard and Newtown's Nik Accousti wrestle for the 113 pound weight class SWC wrestling championship on Saturday, February 11, 2017, at New Fairfield High School, in New Fairfield, Conn.

NEW FAIRFIELD — Ten out of 11. Not too shabby.

After rampaging through its conference schedule in the regular season, it only made sense that the New Milford wrestling team captured the SWC Championship for 10th time in the past 11 seasons.

The Green Wave did so in spectacular fashion Saturday at [New Fairfield High School](#), racking up 251 points to finish well ahead of Newtown (208), its top challenger.

New Milford boasted six weight class champions: **Steven Brooks** (106), **Brandon Leonard** (113), **Colin Linder** (120), **Mel Ortiz** (126), Tyler Schultz (132) and CJ Schultz (138).

"It just shows that everybody is gunning for us, but it doesn't matter," Leonard said. "We know that we're the champs, we're going to come back and we're going to keep it going. I have faith in us. Even down the road when we're gone, they're still going to keep winning it."

"Just trying to do it for the team," Linder said. "It feels good to keep the tradition going. It's kind of a New Milford thing."

For Newtown, four wrestlers captured SWC titles: Ed Lovely (145), **Alex Stavola** (160), Joe Accousti (170) and **Tom Long** (220).

"I go into every match very confident in my training," Lovely said. "I know I'm working harder than anyone else in my weight. I was very confident going in and took care of business. Everyone wrestled their hardest. We had a couple letdowns today, but it's stuff we can build off of and get ready for the state tournament."

"I feel like I accomplished my responsibility as a captain," Long said. "We fell short as a team, but we still had four guys walk away accomplishing their goals. New Milford is a good team. We're a good team too, but what it comes down to is that we had a hard time wrestling in some of those finals matches."

After the Green Wave and Nighthawks, New Fairfield (103), Masuk (92) and Notre Dame-Fairfield (86.5) rounded out the top five.

Seven of the 14 championship bouts featured New Milford vs. Newtown. The Green Wave enjoyed the slight edge, going 4-3 in those matches.

"I just fought through it," Brooks said. "I've been working hard this whole week and the weeks before that. The kid is tough, but I just wanted to win and I wanted it bad."

Other tournament champions were Pomperaug's **Matt Pangle** (152), New Fairfield's **Billy Magrino** (182), Notre Dame-Fairfield's Clyde Auba (195) and Stratford's Sergio

Ferreira (285).

And with that, it's on to the state tournaments.

"I was happy with our performance," Newtown coach **Chris Bray** said. "I think we placed 11 kids in the tournament, which is not bad. Hats off to New Milford; they wrestled hard. As always, they seem to bring it when the time is important. We're excited about (the state tournament). It's a different flavor than what we have here instead of just going basically head-to-head with New Milford."

"I saw a great finals round," New Milford coach **Chris Piel** said. "The Wave got rolling today, man, and we feed off our little guys. We feed off Stevie Brooks and Brandon Leonard and Colin Linder. It was really awesome to watch. I see a difference (after the loss to Danbury)."

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Team Scores: 1. New Milford 251; 2. Newtown 208; 3. New Fairfield 103; 4. Masuk 92; 5. Notre Dame-Fairfield 86.5; 6. Pomperaug 78; 7. Immaculate-Barlow 67; 8. Stratford 60; 9. Bethel 48; 9. Weston 48; 11. Bunnell 46.5; 12. Brookfield 40.

106: Championship—Steven Brooks (NM) dec. **Evan Rooney** (Newtown) 8-7;
Consolation—Ashton Capichiano (NF) pinned **Drake Nguyen** (Brookfield) 2:26.

113: Championship—Brandon Leonard (NM) dec. Nik Accousti (Newtown) 5-1;
Consolation—Hunter Chin (NF) dec. Louis Stabile (Brookfield) 7-3.

120: Championship—Colin Linder (NM) dec. Mike Ferdorko (Masuk) wins 5-1;
Consolation—Jacob Castillo (NDF) pinned **Aidan Occhipinti** (Newtown) 1:13.

126: Championship—Mel Ortiz (NM) pinned Tore Gambino (Masuk) :30; **Consolation**
—Braden Reilly (NF) pinned **Justin Bogdanoff** (Newtown) 5:15.

132: Championship—Tyler Schultz (NM) dec. **Aaron Occhipinti** (Newtown) 6-5;
Consolation—Kyle Sheehan (Pomperaug) defeated Jason Vitrit (NF) by forfeit.

138: Championship—CJ Schultz (NM) major dec. **Owen Walsh** (Newtown) 13-1;
Consolation—Tavon Simpson (NDF) dec. Christian Cuevas (Weston) 6-4 (OT).

145: Championship—Ed Lovely (Newtown) pinned **Vincent Rago** (NM) :27;
Consolation—Carson LiCastrì (Immaculate-Barlow) pinned **Jason Lobdell** (Masuk)
1:13.

152: Championship—Matt Pangle (Pomperaug) pinned **Ben Coppock** (Immaculate-Barlow) in :59; **Consolation**—Alex Richardson (NM) pinned Jakari Walker (NDF)
5:50.

160: Championship—Alex Stavola (Newtown) dec. Cameron Berger (NM) 5-2;
Consolation—Jack Barnhart-Sullivan (Bunnell) dec. Tim Cocchiola (Pomperaug) 5-2.

170: Championship—Joe Accousti (Newtown) tech. fall Kyle Fabich (NM) 15-0;
Consolation—Nick Garoffolo (Barlow-Immaculate) pinned **Rodolfo Matthews**
(Masuk) 2:19.

182: Championship—Billy Magrino (NF) pinned **Eric Flores** (Stratford) 3:52;
Consolation—Michael Haggerty (NM) dec. **Carlo Zaccagnini** (Masuk) 3-1.

195: Championship—Clyde Auba (NDF) pinned **Jason Milfort** (Bunnell) 5:36;
Consolation—David Angulo (NM) pinned Michael Otworth (Weston) 2:55.

220: Championship—Tom Long (Newtown) dec. Nick Cote (Bethel) 3-1; **Consolation**
—Rob Krajewski (Masuk) pinned Andrew Anglace (Pomperaug) 1:24.

285: Championship—Sergio Ferreira (Stratford) pinned **Wyatt Smiley** (Brookfield)
1:20; **Consolation**—Dan Geriak (NDF) dec. **Joe Zeller** (Newtown) 1-0.