

**Sports**

## **Montville's Caskey wins first State Open**

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NEW HAVEN - "Verklemt" is a Yiddish word that means "too emotional to speak."

It's not a phrase one would typically use to describe Montville wrestling coach Gary Wilcox, the outspoken leader of the Indians who is seldom at a loss for words.

But that was the coach's emotional state Saturday night, as there were no words to describe how he felt after watching his senior Noah Caskey capture his first State Open wrestling championship, beating Demetre Carnot of Maloney in the 132-pound finals via a 7-2 decision.

Caskey and two Fitch High School wrestlers, Jarod Kosman and Dakota Grover, were the three local wrestlers to bring home individual State Open titles from the Floyd Little Athletic Center in New Haven.

"It consumes your life almost," Caskey said of his desire to win a State Open title. "The past two weeks, we've been working on re-shooting, attacking and not stopping."

He had to, since Carnot was a very active wrestler himself and rather large, too. Carnot wrestled at 138 pounds for much of the season, but was able to come down to 132 over the last third of the season.

Still, he could not get much accomplished offensively against Caskey and the Montville wrestler - who captured his 46th win without a loss this season and is closing in on Joel Morth's program record for career victories- jumped out to the 4-1 lead going into the second period.

"We were looking for the second takedown," Wilcox said. "Noah can ride the hell out of anybody, but that kid he couldn't ride, because he was just too powerful."

Caskey clinched the win with a third takedown with 22 seconds left.

The one title that had eluded Kosman in his first three years was the State Open. The two-time Class L state champion and four-time Eastern Connecticut Conference titleholder made sure he didn't go home empty-handed again.

Kosman downed Windham's Alejandro Garcia in an All-Eastern Connecticut Conference, 113-pound final, 7-3, to claim the Open championship.

"This was very important," Kosman said. "It's been a big goal of mine since I've been in high school and it was nice to finally accomplish it."

Grover helped make program history.

He pinned Isaiah Jiminian of East Hartford in 3:14 to win the 220-pound final. It was the first time the Falcons have had two State Open champs in the same year.

"I wanted it bad," Grover said. "It's my senior year, I had to get it."

The Killingly Redmen, meanwhile, rebounded from their upset loss at the hands of Foran in the Class M state championship last week, finishing in a three-way tie for second place with Bristol Eastern and Fairfield behind state champion Danbury (149.5 points) with 95 points.

"It's our best finish ever, it's something we can put up in the school and I think it's our best point total ever," Killingly coach Rich Bowen said.

Killingly's previous best was a third-place finish in 2004.

Unfortunately for the Redmen, neither Zack Burgess (145 pounds) nor Zach Caffrey (182) could pull out a victory in the championship matches, as both were pinned.

At the time, Bowen thought it meant that the Redmen would have either a third or fourth-place finish as Bristol Eastern was a point ahead, Southington a half-point back and Fairfield Warde two points behind. But a Bristol Eastern wrestler threw his head gear, cost his team a point and created the three-way deadlock.

"You need a little luck once in a while," Bowen said. "We had a little luck at the ECC (championship), not so much at the 'M's,' but you have to have a little to help you through."

Killingly also had five place-finishers (Dan Charron third; Derek Turner fourth and Mike Charron sixth in addition to Burgess and Caffrey), which also tied a program best.



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