

MURRAY, HENRY, 'MARK', HELMSTETTER GET WINS; BALBONI TOPS JP CHRISTIANO, 5-2

Brearley Bears Grab, 51-22, Win over Cougar Wrestlers

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Fresh off capturing their seventh straight Union County Tournament (UCT) championship, the Brearley Bears won nine of 13 contested bouts to defeat the Cranford High School wrestling team in Cranford on January 27. Corey Markovitch (152-lbs), Gavin Murray (120-lbs), Mike Helmstetter (126-lbs) and Ian Henry (132-lbs) earned victories for the 6-5 Cougars.

The 5-3 Bears jumped to a 6-0, team lead in the first bout of the evening when Nick Lospinoso rocked Matt Dimartino to sleep in 51 seconds with a cradle at 145-lbs.

Markovitch faced Andrew Scarillo and became a victim of a pair of first-period takedowns but wasted little time when he settled Scarillo in 2:29 with a pull-back cradle to tie the team score. From that point, however, the Bears would roll off eight straight victories.

At 160-lbs, John Balboni, ranked fifth in the state, took Cougar Glen Cook straight to his back and pinned him with a half nelson in 23 seconds.

The key match-up of the evening was next at 170-lbs. Cougar JP Christiano, an NJSIAA quarterfinalist last year at 160-lbs, squared off with Joey Balboni, presently ranked sixth in the state. On January 22, Balboni had defeated Christiano, 5-2, for

the UCT 170-lb title.

Lightning struck again! After a scoreless first period, Balboni escaped and added a takedown in the second period. Christiano escaped in the third, but Balboni added another takedown.

Christiano escaped, making the score, 5-2. No more offense was added and Balboni had denied Christiano of his 100th varsity career victory.

At 182-lbs, Anthony Scorese caught Cougar Nick Diaz off-bal-

with an arm bar at 195-lbs.

At 220-lb, Bear Anthony Tancs demonstrated his top-position skills when he handled Jeff Weiss the entire second period, while picking up three back points with a double arm bar maneuver. He

with a power half. Bear Frank Chessa received a forfeit at 113-lbs.

Murray stopped the bleeding with a barrage of near-falls, before pinning Dylan Oliva in 3:22 with an arm bar stack.

Murray explained, "Arm bar, far side cradle, near side cradle and throwing legs and a power half. We practice them really hard in the room. Good partners! Good coaches! It pays off."

At 126-lbs, Helmstetter quickly took Kevin Oliva to the mat, then employed a Turk step-in before pinning him in 49 seconds with a front arm bar.

In his bout with Bear Mike Disko, Henry worked a front headlock to record a barrel roll takedown and a side single-leg takedown in the first period.

"I like to put them in a front headlock. Once you get that front head, there is a whole arsenal of things you can do, as long as you get your opponent to expect that front headlock," Henry said.

After using a switch reversal in the second period, Henry pulled off a wild takedown to add back points.

"He took a shot and I figured shin whizzer. I knocked his leg

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GOING FOR THE DOUBLE-LEG TAKEDOWN...Cougar Nick Diaz attempts to get a double-leg takedown on Brearley's Anthony Scorese in his 182-lb bout. See *The Westfield Leader* newspaper for story also

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ance with a double-leg tackle takedown which resulted in a 2:41 fall. Bear Jeff Velez showed Rob Kessler the lights in 4:28

added an escape and a takedown in the third period to grab a 6-0 decision. Bear heavyweight Mike Christian clamped Jon Elkhouri in 3:36 with a front cradle, and at 106-lbs, Bear Nick DeMarco pried Kevin Quigley to his back in 1:12



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